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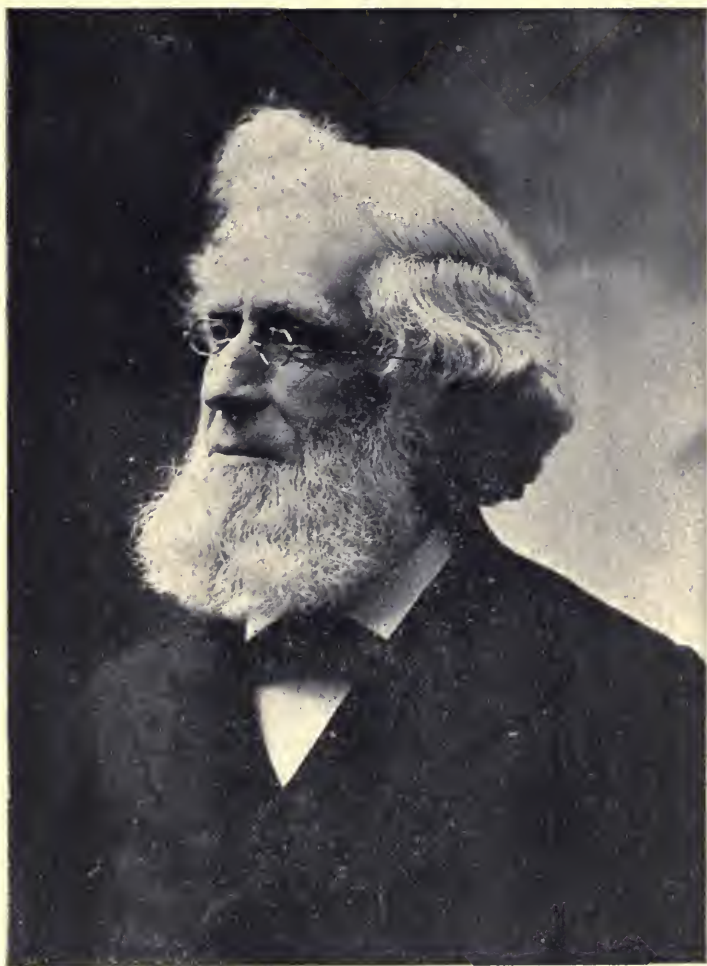
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
EDWARD AUSTIN SHELDON







EDWARD AUSTIN SHELDON.

# Autobiography OF Edward Austin Sheldon

Edited by  
MARY SHELDON BARNES

With an introduction by  
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Commissioner of Education, State of New York

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## INTRODUCTION

THIS book sets forth in somewhat graphic and very interesting ways several important phases of human progress in the State of New York, and so in the country. It pencils, with a master's hand, life in western New York when the Genesee country was upon the national frontier and sparsely peopled by the very salt of the earth. It throws light upon the early life at Hamilton College, one of the best of the many denominational colleges which started the beacon fires of education in New York. It portrays an educational missionary movement which was among the first, if it was not the very first, of its kind, and which initiated methods that have been adopted since in every considerable settlement in this country. It traces, with less detail than is desired, the evolution of one of the earliest, and certainly one of the very best, of the State schools for the training of teachers—a school that was distinguished and became widely influential by reason of the sane and original educational philosophy of its first great principal. And it takes some very natural excursions through the valleys and up to the mountain peaks of the far reaching and broken field of American education.

Through all this there is the modest but virile personality of one of the great men of the nineteenth century. Constructiveness is better than destructiveness; intellectual and moral progress is of greater account than commercial and

industrial prosperity; the real accomplishments of peace go deeper and reach farther than the victories of war. If Edward Austin Sheldon had done in business or in warfare what he did in education, he would have been thought a great man, and why should he not be characterized accurately because of the new outlook, the new methods, and the new spirit which he gave to all American schools?

There never was a gentler spirit, and there never was a more exact master of organization and of detail. But he might have been all that, and so have gained our regard or admiration, without making any lasting impression upon the educational work of a country that is preeminent for its work in education, if he had not been moved by a philosophy of education which was then new and must always be fundamental and vital. And he might even have been imbued with that philosophy of education and not have made it a living force in the schools of his country, if he had not been as persistent and unyielding as he was gentle and sincere.

Many strong, noble lives have entered into the making of the Oswego State Normal School. A considerable number of exceptional teachers have given form and direction and energy to its activities. But Dr. Sheldon was at the bottom of it all. He brought great teachers there; he tolerated none who were without decided merit; thus he made the average of efficiency remarkably high. With one accord these teachers would testify that Dr. Sheldon's mind dominated the life of the institution. An educational philosophy which came from his nature, his experiences, and his study, was enforced by his steadiness and his firmness, by his manner of preaching, and by his practicing what he

preached, until it gave the Oswego Normal School a distinctive character in the country; until it came to be discussed in all the educational conventions for a generation; and until it was clearly felt in all the schoolrooms in the land

Dr. Sheldon was a gentle, vital, active force in all the educational activities of the State of New York. He was at the maximum of his influence during the six years when I was State Superintendent of Public Instruction. We became close friends at once. I could not understand at first all that he was trying to do, but it quickly grew upon me, for he was not long in bringing me under the spell of his mesmeric influence. I am gratified to see in this book a letter which went to him from my heart as I was leaving the office of State Superintendent. So far as the State was concerned, he had his way in all regards save one. That was the unifying of the two State departments of educational administration. The book alludes to it. His purpose was correct, but the time had not come. We were both right; he in urging the movement, and I in refusing to join in the agitation of the proposition at that time. Our situations, relations, and responsibilities were different. Unification had to come through more tribulation than we had endured or were prepared to endure at that time. Indeed, it would have failed then, no matter who supported it. It came in its own time and in its own way; and it came in better form and upon a surer footing than would have been possible either thirty, or twenty, or ten years earlier. But the editors have ample warrant for attributing to Dr. Sheldon a good share in the credit of it.

Another great man of the schools, Dr. William T. Harris, once in conversation about our early New England homes

said, "Don't give a cent to maintain an old hearthstone, but contribute all you can to publish a book about it." The Oswego Normal School will soon leave the old building which Dr. Sheldon and the associates whom he called about him made great. It will go to a new and more imposing structure upon the acres that he loved. It will not be necessary to worship the old building, but it is well to have prepared this book, for through the long future it will help keep green the memory of a good man and a great teacher.

ANDREW S. DRAPER.

Albany, N. Y., 1911.

## CHAPTER I

### EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS

THEY say I was born October 4, 1823, and from this date I reckon my years. It seemed to me a long time from one to twenty-one. As a boy I felt that I could never live to be twenty-one. Even now as I look back over my existence, it sometimes seems to me that I have lived forever.

The things that I remember as a child are very trivial, and I suppose they could not be otherwise. So far as I can recall, the first thing that left an ineffaceable trace on my memory was the act of the servant, one Alzada Simons, who, taking me in her arms, held me over the well that I might look down and see the water below. The well was in 'front of the door, only a few steps away; the water being drawn by an old-fashioned well-sweep. Another act of this servant also stays in my memory. She had been baking pumpkin pies and by some accident had upset one of them, to the serious disarrangement of it. This she gave to the boy Edward, who, taking it out of doors and sitting down under the pantry window, eagerly devoured it, leaving no part of either crust or filling.

I remember the little frame house in which we lived at that time, and many years subsequently. It had one common living-room which served as kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and, in time of sickness as hospital. Off from this

was a small room occupied by father and mother as a sleeping-room, with a trundle-bed for the children, which was rolled under the parents' bed during the day and drawn out at night. The pantry was next to the bedroom and opened into the living-room. These three rooms occupied the first floor. The "chamber," as the upper floor was called, was a low half story all in one room, and was reached by a ladder. There stood the family loom with a bed at each end. By means of a blanket a partition was sometimes improvised in case of strict necessity. After a few years partitions were made and a staircase was built. Such was the house that my father erected for the reception of my mother in 1819.

In 1815 my father took a farm one mile east of Perry Center. By the fall of 1818, he had succeeded in clearing ten acres of the solid forest of beech, oak, and maple, with a sprinkling of ash, whitewood, and elm. He then returned on foot to New Marlboro (Mass.), taught school during the winter, and April 15, 1819, was married and started on his wedding tour toward the vast wilderness that had already begun to yield to the woodman's axe. This trip was made by the bridal pair in a canvas-covered lumber wagon, which contained all their personal and housekeeping goods. The journey, which led in part through forests and over corduroy roads, was accomplished in about ten days, including the Sabbath, during which they halted. The new couple were taken into the log cabin with an uncle until the new frame house, already described, was ready for occupancy. In a few weeks they were installed in the home that was the birth-place of their children.

The house was by no means completed at this time. It had no windows or doors, and no clap-boards. As for lath



and plaster, they were quite out of the question. They never had a place in the new house. In the event of a driving storm, which actually did occur, continuing for three days, what little the house contained was piled up in the center of the living-room to protect it from the rain. Uncle Oren, coming in at the time, and finding them in this sad plight, took my mother home with him until the storm was over. Before the closing in of winter, the doors and windows were in and the house was clapboarded. They were now fairly settled and ready for further pioneer work.

My father had desired to be a doctor; this his mother opposed, wishing him to be a shoemaker. To gratify her, he spent some time in learning the trade, but it being against his taste, he abandoned it. He learned enough, however, to be of service to him in repairing the shoes of the 'family. The harnesses, he always repaired. I well remember the old shoemaker's bench with its meager kit of tools which always stood in the upper chamber. He also tried his hand at school teaching, as almost everybody did in those days; but he was, by inheritance from a long line of ancestors, fitted to be a pioneer and a farmer.

The new farm contained at the outset a little over one hundred acres of solid wood. By slow degrees the forest melted before his axe, until the broad and fertile fields of waving grain gave evidence of a wonderful conquest.

The method of clearing the land was to fell the timber into piles and windrows, as far as possible, and, when a little dry, set fire to the fallen timber and burn all that would burn. What was left was drawn and piled up in large heaps called log heaps. The process was called logging. When in right condition for it, these log heaps were burned, and

then the land was cleared and ready for a crop, which was sowed or planted among the stumps. The only product of the timber, aside from a certain quantity of charcoal manufactured, was the ashes left on the ground. These were carefully gathered up and sold to the "asheries," where they were converted into potash. In the early history of the country, these asheries were scattered all over the country.

These were hard times for the early settlers, as is the case in every new country. My Uncle Horace used to tell the story of going five miles to exchange wheat for nails, a bushel of wheat for every pound of nails. Money was very scarce. Barter was the usual mode of exchange.

As for clothing, this was largely manufactured and made up by the industrious housewife. Nearly every house had its wheels for spinning and looms for weaving both linen and wool. Our mothers did wonderful things with these primitive aids of industry. With the linen wheel, which now stands in our parlor, honorably resting from its labors, linen thread was spun. With the hand loom, which always stood in the chamber, this thread was woven into cloth for towels, bed furnishing, and summer clothes for the children. Some of the garments thus made were a part of my outfit for college.

We children were always interested in seeing these occupations go on. The preparation of the flax for the wheel was quite as interesting as the spinning and weaving. The flax for this purpose was pulled up by the roots by hand, and laid in thin layers in swaths to dry. When thoroughly dry it was bound in bundles and packed away under the ridgepole of the barn on a scaffolding of rails, where it

would keep perfectly dry. It was the business of the boy to do the stowing away.

The time of highest delight was in the early spring, when the "brake" and hetchel were brought out, the bundles of flax thrown down, unbound, and in small handfuls put under the heavy "brake." This was a wooden instrument about four to six feet long, consisting of two parts attached at the end by a pin which allowed the upper part to move freely on the lower. The lower part stood on legs that raised it three or four feet from the ground, and consisted of five or six narrow strips of hard wood, probably maple, tapering to a narrow edge on their upper side. The upper part was similarly constructed and, when brought down, the long knife-like strips just fitted into the openings between the strips on the lower part. The upper jaw of the machine being raised, the handful of flax was placed in the lower jaw, and then the upper was made to fall heavily on the flax, to break the woody fibre, called "shives." This operation was repeated until all the wood in the flax was thoroughly broken up. The fibres were then placed over the top of a board about four feet high and ten to twelve inches wide, finished up to a somewhat sharp edge; this instrument was the "swingle board." The "swingle knife," made of wood in the shape of a two-edged sword or blade, was three or four inches wide and as many feet in length. With the broken flax placed over the top of the swingle board, the workman proceeded to work out the woody fibre by striking it with the swingle knife.

The flax being thus freed of its shives, was subjected to the hatchel (commonly called "hetchel"). This instrument consisted of a large number of sharp spikes fastened

through an end of a board two or three feet long and five to six inches wide. The flax being drawn through these teeth was freed of its coarser parts, called tow. Being subjected to two or three of these hatchels, of different grades, it became fit for the spinning wheel. The finer products of the hatchel were worked into a coarse tow cloth, and the dressed flax into cloth of a fine texture.

From the spindle of the wheel the yarn was reeled off onto spools ready for the loom. Little use was made of the coarsest tow that came from the first hatcheling, except for packing and chinking. The finer portions were converted into a coarse cloth for bags, towels, and children's clothing. Such were the processes by which the flax was made to serve the needs of the household.

The manufacture of woolen garments was a larger and more important element of household economy. There, too, was much that interested the boys and gave occupation to the girls. First came the sheep washing, which was to the boys one of the most important days in the whole year.

Usually two or three farmers would join flocks as a matter of greater economy in operating. Each person was fitted out with a bundle of old clothes to be worn while handling the sheep in the water. The presence of the boy was most essential on this occasion to drive and hurdle the sheep.

The place selected for the washing must be well provided with water, preferably where there was a flume, so that the water could be allowed to flow freely, and so facilitate the cleansing of the wool. The flock was first driven into an enclosure adjoining the water. The boy was allowed to join in the catching of the sheep and bringing them to the water's edge for the men, who were in the water to their

waists, engaged in washing them. When the last sheep had thus been washed and set free, all started for home.

Sheep shearing was next in order. This, too, was one of the great days for the boy on the farm. He was always present to help catch the sheep for the shearers. And then the lambs must have their tails cut off and their ears marked; and the handling of the lambs was the peculiar prerogative of the boy, who never failed to be on hand and to be very active on such occasions.

The fleeces taken 'from the sheep were rolled up and packed away for a favorable market, or sent to the mills to be carded into rolls ready for the spinster. This carding was sometimes done at home with small hand cards. The spinning was done on a wheel with a large rim, which the spinster turned with the right hand, as with the left, she held the rolls, and stepping back drew out the yarn, which she returned to the spindle by retracing her steps in a forward direction. Thus back and forth, backward and forward, she would tread day after day, filling spindle after spindle, being repeatedly relieved by drawing off the thread onto the reel. From the reel it was wound on spools ready for the loom.

The weaving of the thread into cloth was a slow process, and was done at odd moments snatched from the household duties. So it would be a long time before a piece of cloth would be completed, and then taking it 'from the loom was an act of no small importance. It was the end of a long and tedious piece of work. The spinning was often done by young women brought into the house and paid by the day. The weaving, however, was usually done by the mother, and it was not common for the daughter or young

people to learn to do this work, so that it will soon be a lost art if it is not already so. The sponging and cutting into garments was usually left with the tailor, although the garments for the younger children were cut, sometimes, by the mother.

That such mothers were very capable women, goes without saying. Such a woman was my mother. Although never a well woman, she was diligent, patient, and persevering, and accomplished a great deal in the course of the year. She lived not for herself alone, but did many deeds of mercy and charity. She looked after the sick and needy of the neighborhood. She might often be seen with her bundle of medicinal herbs, of which she always kept an abundant supply, going to prescribe for some sick child or neighbor. She was an admirable nurse, and knew how to employ many simple remedies for common diseases, and particularly those of children. To the church and many of the religious benevolences of the day she gave much time and aid. Her Bible class of adults she held until she was ninety years old. Her mental faculties remained unimpaired until the day of her death at about ninety-six years of age.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PIONEER FARM BOY'S OCCUPATIONS AND INTERESTS

AMONG other occupations of the house in which my mother engaged, and which always interested us children, was candle-making. Very little was bought that could be made in the house, and her candles were the principal dependence for light in the house and barn. They were made of different sizes and lengths for the various uses to which they were to be put. The wicks for the house were mostly made of cotton wicking, which was bought by the pound and arranged in suitable lengths and bulk for the kinds of candles to be made. The wicks for the barn lantern were, however, made from tow spun into thread and prepared for the purpose. The tow wicking did not give so good a light as the cotton, but lasted longer, and was thus more economical.

We got along with less light in those days than would satisfy the households of to-day. No candle was allowed to burn when not in use and several people together were accommodated with a single light. The wicks, arranged nine on a rod, the rods with each end on a pole arranged for the purpose were placed side by side at sufficient distance so that the candles would not touch each other as they grew under the hand of the manipulator. A vessel of hot tallow was placed conveniently near for the purpose, and the wicks

on the rod were dipped in the tallow successively until all were dipped. By the time the last rod of wicks was dipped, the first row would be sufficiently cool to allow of another dipping, and so the process was repeated until the candles were of the desired size.

It was interesting to the boy to see these long rows of white candles hanging by their loops, and growing larger at each successive dipping. To avoid soiling the floor by any drops of tallow, boards were placed under the candles as they were being dipped. The proper consistency of the candles was a matter of no small importance. This was regulated by more or less beeswax being added to the tallow. The form of the candles was also thought of, and to be sure that they would remain straight and smooth the wicks were first dipped in pure melted tallow and then run through the hand and stretched out to their full length. This was a preparation for the regular dipping. When the dipping was completed, they were allowed to stand until perfectly cool, when they were sorted and packed away in boxes ready for use. The tallow used was the savings from the beef and mutton used during the year.

"Butchering" was another intensely interesting occasion. An occasional beef or sheep was killed, and as the neighbors did the same thing, exchanges were made, thus arranging a sufficient supply of fresh meat for all. In those days, in the country, there were no meat markets or meat peddlers. Much salt meat was used, particularly beef and pork, which was packed away in barrels and salted as the cattle or hogs were killed.

The kindling of the fire around the great potash kettle, the arranging of the temporary scaffolding with its in-





THE OLD HOME AT PERRY.



clined plane, up which the carcasses were to be drawn into position for being dipped into the boiling water to scald the skin so that the hair could be easily pulled or scraped off; the suspending them by the heels on the great cross-bar, the taking out of the entrails; the selecting of such portions as were considered suitable for use, notably the heart and those parts of the entrails adapted to making sausages; the removing of the dressed carcasses to the cellar; the cutting up of the meat for packing; these were all operations that would naturally interest a boy, and especially if he were made to feel that his help was important, an inference he was very likely to make even if not stated to him in so many words. The pork was usually "cut up" and packed at night.

There were some other things that naturally grew out of "butchering day," that also appealed to the boy—notably the "*stuffing of sausages.*" This was indeed a red-letter occasion for the whole household. So important was the occasion that it became the date from which we reckoned the time for arranging various important matters; notably the coming of the schoolmaster to board—for these were the days when the schoolmaster "boarded around." He was supposed to board with each patron of the school according to the number of the family represented in the school. We sometimes thought, however, that other conditions had something to do with the length of his stay in some families, and it would not be strange if they did; indeed, quite human that they should. But it was the generally expressed wish that he should not come until after the "*stuffing of sausages.*"

With the children, sausage stuffing was an event looked

forward to and remembered with the greatest delight. When the delectable day came, all the chores and other affairs that required attention were disposed of at an early hour, and the whole family of little ones gathered around the central figures, father and mother, who had the work to perform. The sausage skins had been thoroughly cleansed by turning them inside out, scraping them, and rinsing in many waters, and were piled in a vessel by the side of the operators. The sausage meat, consisting of lean pork chopped fine, had been previously prepared with certain spices to suit the taste of the family, and placed in a vessel hard by. The sausage filler was constructed something like a squirt gun. It would hold perhaps two or three quarts, and when filled, the meat was forced out with the piston through the narrow stem which was inserted into one end of the delicate skin, the other end being securely 'fastened'; and with marvelous quickness, a thing in the eyes of the children wonderful to behold, a full-grown sausage, three to four feet long and an inch in diameter, lay curled up, serpent-like, before us. The sausages were hung up on poles for a few days to season, and then were packed away in jars and melted lard poured over them, filling all the interstices. Thus they were preserved for use as wanted.

The annual festivity that went on throughout the entire farming community at the "butchering" season deserves recognition. It must be remembered that fresh meat was not the ordinary diet of the farmers, and especially the fresh pork. The fresh beef and lamb, the veal, and the chicken came in occasionally, at different seasons of the year, but there was no meat so palatable to most of us as

some of the choice bits of the freshly killed pig. Such at least, appeared to be the general judgment of the people who indulged in this feast. Luckily the neighbors did not all butcher on the same day, but the time extended through several weeks including the latter part of November, and the early days of December, so that, by a system of exchange, the fresh pork feast went on continuously well nigh to the end of the year. The joyful anticipations and glad remembrances of this prolonged feast still linger vividly in the memory after three score years and ten; and although it is long since I ceased to eat pork in any form, yet there is no kind of meat that I even now consider more toothsome than the tenderloin and the sausage as they came to my mother's table. Salt meat was the staple meat of the farm then and I suppose it may be even to this day. The men who work hard in the open air each day seem to thrive on it, but it could hardly be recommended to persons of less active employment.

The making of soap was, in a way, the outcome of the butchering season, although not immediately resulting. All the rinds from the pork, the bones, and every bit of grease and fat not consumed were scrupulously saved for the making of soft soap. The wood ashes from the stove were saved and put into the "leach," to which water was added and the resultant lye caught in a vessel at the bottom. This leach consisted of a hollow log cut from the forest and set on end. The lye was essential in the manufacture of the soap. The making of the soap gave a hard day to the housekeeper, and, although it was mostly out-of-door work, but few others on the farm had much to do with it. A

barrel of soft soap was always placed in the cellar as the product. It was used for laundry work, and a dish of it always stood in the wash-room for use by the men in washing their hands as they came from their work.

## CHAPTER III

### OTHER FARM INDUSTRIES

TO THE royal occasions on the farm that helped greatly to give this kind of life a charm and left behind most pleasant memories, I must add a few others of no less importance to the boy. Among these, was the "taking up of the bees." In those days the bees were allowed to swarm naturally and were shaken from their temporary resting-place into rude hives, made fresh and clean and scented with "bee-balm" with the hope of making a welcome new home for them. Sometimes, however, they preferred a venture to the forests, and the din and noise of horns and tin pans was not sufficient to deter them from their purpose. I shall never forget the sweet lullabies of my mother as she sat by the newly-hived swarm, with the bees flying thick about her. Her voice seemed to have a charm for them that usually contented them to remain where they were. They seemed to have no thought of harming her.

When the old hives became quite full of honey the bees were destroyed, and the honey was taken from the hive. A shallow hole eight or ten inches deep was dug in the ground, of proper size to allow the hive just to cover it. Small sticks three or four inches long were prepared, sharpened at one end and split at the other, with a small swab of cloth saturated with melted brimstone inserted into the split; and

four or five of them were stuck into the ground at the bottom of the hole. These being lighted,, the doomed bees were set over the burning brimstone torches, and earth was packed tight around the bottom of the hive to prevent any ingress of fresh air or egress of live bees. All holes and cracks in the hive had been previously closed up. That the bees were soon all smothered is apparent. For a short time they were left to their fate, and then, if on striking the hive no answer came back, the decision followed that all were dead and the hives were taken to the house, turned bottom side up, and the process of extracting the honey went on as comb after comb was piled away in tin pans and on platters. In this way hundreds of pounds of honey were stored away for winter use.

My mother never hid anything from her boys, and the piles of honey were no exception. The children went to them when they wished and helped themselves with perfect freedom. At times they would take with them a friend to enjoy the sweet repast. I am glad my father kept bees and did it in the old-fashioned way, otherwise many a joyful occasion and sweet remembrance would have been taken out of my life. After more modern hives were substituted for the old hollow log, or the square box with stationary supports for the combs, and we began to draw honey out in boxes, our bee-keeping very soon came to an end.

The beginning of haying, too, had its season of anticipation. There was the repairing of the hand-rakes, the putting in of missing teeth, the replacing of broken or worn-out forms, snaths and scythes, repairs to hay-racks, the putting of bays and hay-sheds in order, ready to receive the new hay; and lastly the grinding of the scythes as the final



act of preparation. In those days we had no mowing machines, no hay-tedders, no horse-rakes, and no patent horse-forks—everything was done by hand.

In haying-time the boy had to turn the grindstone for the sharpening of the scythes. He was expected to follow the mowers and spread the grass that they left in the swaths, to facilitate the curing of the hay. If water was wanted it was his task to bring it. He also brought the luncheons in the middle of the forenoon. When required, he assisted in turning the hay to hasten the curing and in raking it into wind-rows for the pitchers; if it was to be cocked up, he raked up the scattered hay; he raked after the pitchers as the hay was loaded on the wagons; and he was indispensable in mowing it away, especially under the low roof and in narrow places not easily accessible to the men. If nothing more important was required of him, he was set to treading down the hay, to make it as compact as possible.

The wheat harvest hardly waited for the completion of the haying. A man who in those days could, with his hand-cradle, cut two acres a day, was considered a smart man; and the one who could follow him with the rake and bind what he cut, was regarded as a man of rare capability. In this way, two men would possibly cut and bind two acres a day. It was more common for the boy to rake the grain after the cradle, while a man followed to bind the sheaves. At the end of the day the sheaves were put in shocks of about twelve bundles. In this part of the work the boy was usually called upon to help. At their leisure hours the children were allowed to glean the scattering heads of grain, and after the threshing, were paid for the product in money.

After the haying and harvesting came the threshing of the grain. This was, indeed, a grand occasion. The threshers came with two teams and two men—one man to drive the horses that ran the machine, and one to tend the machine, feeding it with grain. The work of the boy was to get the sheaves from the mow, and to hand them unbound to the man who fed the machine. This required one boy to unbind and two or three, depending on the distance the sheaves were from the machine, to get the sheaves to the boy that unbound. The unbinding meant the loosening of the knots at both ends, lest they should clog or injure the machine. This was lively work and allowed of no rest so long as the machine was running. At the tail of the machine stood a man who removed the straw. A second man took the straw from the first and landed it outside the threshing floor. A third man pitched it upon the stack, where were usually a man and boy to stack it. As the stack grew in height an additional pitcher was required.

Not all the grain was threshed in this way. Odd bits were beaten with the ancient flail. This was a slow process, but gave employment in the winter when there was not so much to do. Another equally primitive mode was sometimes employed. The threshing floor was filled with sheaves of grain, and a span of horses or a yoke of cattle was turned in and made to tread out the kernels by passing round and round on the sheaves; care being taken to allow them to change directions before they should become dizzy. The straw was occasionally turned until the grain was fully extracted.

The threshing, by whatever process, did not, by any means, end all of the hard work. The grain had yet to be

winnowed and sent to the market or the mill. For this part of the work the boy was always called into requisition. He must, at least, turn the fanning-mill that freed the kernels from the chaff and foul seed. Ordinarily it had to pass through the mill twice before being properly cleaned for the market. This work was usually done on rainy days and at night when out-of-door work could not be attempted. Many a weary day and dark night have I devoted to the turning of a fanning-mill crank. I would turn with one hand until it was tired, then change to the other hand, and for variety would employ both hands. For a few turns this might be enjoyed by the boy, but long continued the aspect of the work changed. To swim in the wheat when stored in the ample bins suited his idea of fun much better. Nothing afforded a more acceptable play-ground than a bin of winnowed wheat.

When the wheat was put in bags and loaded into the wagon for the miller or the market, it was the boy's privilege to go along as companion. This often meant a ride of from fifteen or twenty miles in the round trip. The lunch was taken along, as also the bait for the horses, and partaken of at the place of marketing the wheat. This was usually York or Geneseo, places seven to ten miles away. All this was adapted to the capacity of the boy's enjoyment, and he relished it.

## CHAPTER IV

### OUR APPLE ORCHARD

WHEN my father planted his apple orchard, his neighbors asked him if he ever expected to get any apples from it. He acknowledged that he had slight hopes of ever realizing very much fruit from it, but he thought his children might. In a short time, within two or three years, he had the pleasure of picking two apples. The next year he had a peck, and then stopped measuring. For fifty years or more he gathered abundant crops, and then they became at times a source of no mean revenue. The family was always abundantly supplied, and he had usually a handsome surplus for the market.

That orchard was one of the most delightful resorts of our childhood. Even in advanced life, after the old farm had gone into other hands, the remembrances were so vivid that it was not a little sad to my sister and me to see the old orchard cut down as no longer profitable to the farmer. In imagination our memories still cling to this favored spot.

But our cup of joy was complete, filled to overflowing, when the final apple harvest came. This was the time when the help of the boy was fully appreciated—a fact which added genuine dignity to his presence. He was everywhere ready to pick up, to sort, to carry, to pile, anything and everything that was in his capacity to do. He liked to

handle apples, he liked to see the red and silver piles, he liked to see wagons loaded to their brims with the apples destined for the cider mill—everything connected with this business was a source of great delight to him. There was the unloading of the choice apples for winter use, and placing them by their sorts in the bins; the taking of the cider apples to the mill; the sips of sweet cider through straws, as it exuded from the press on its way to the vat below; or the more hearty draughts from the cup provided for the purpose at the vat itself; the bringing home of the cider barrels and placing them in the cellar, destined for vinegar—all these were added phases of the prolonged joy.

And then we are never tired of going to the cellar to view the apples in the bins, to take a sip of the sweet cider, and fill our pockets with the most luscious fruit the ample stores afforded; a supply that rarely failed us until a new crop appeared. No restraint was ever put on the children. They always had all they cared for, and the boy was sure to take a generous treat for his schoolmates, which his numerous pockets furnished him the opportunity for doing.

Then there was the drying of the apples for use when the stock of green apples in the early summer should run low, or for exchange at the grocery for such articles as were needed in the family. My father was an expert in paring apples with the knife, the only process known in the early childhood of the boy. Notwithstanding the expertness of my father at this business, it was a slow process at best, and it was hardly possible to prepare large quantities in this way. Later, when the paring machine and corer came into use, the case was different. Then it was that the dried apples were sent to the market by the bushel.

It was the work of the boy to quarter the apples and string the quarters for drying. These strings were hung on poles in front of the great fireplace or in the open sun, according to the weather and the season. Sometimes the quarters were placed on boards in the sun without stringing, or were dried in the oven. This preparation of dried fruit gave occasion for the "apple-paring bee," which brought together boys and girls of the neighborhood for a jolly time. The boys usually pared the apples and cored them on machines, while the girls quartered, removing any remaining bits of skin or cores, and attended to the stringing. Some work was accomplished at the "bees," but never to the exclusion of much 'fun and frolic. These "apple-paring bees" will remain in the memories of all the participants until memory fails to do its work.

I am grateful for the old orchard and all that it brought to me as a boy—joy, health, and good living; and above all, for the thoughtful father who planted it. It remained during his life-time a monument to his wisdom and forethought. I am glad he lived so long to enjoy it.

## CHAPTER V

### MY SCHOOL LIFE

SCHOOL life to me was one continuous holiday. To study was out of the question. I did not know what it was to study. I have no remembrance of having studied a moment in two years, unless it might be called studying to memorize lists of (to me) utterly meaningless words. If this doubtful process may be called studying, I did study my spelling lessons one winter when a prize of one dollar was offered to the one who should be at the head of the spelling class the most times. This prize was a temptation that I could not resist to engage in a most unpleasant occupation. To the mind of the boy, one dollar was a mine of wealth. He never possessed so much in all his life and he resolved to win it, cost what effort it might. He went in to win and was partially successful. It was equally divided between him and a girl in the school. There began and ended all his efforts at studying in the public school.

The boy literally hated study. With tears in his eyes, over and over again, he pleaded with his father to allow him to stay at home and work. The father's answer always was, "Edward, when you are older, you will always be sorry that you neglected your school." The answer of the heart, though not expressed in words, was, "I know better." I am not prepared to say that I have much feeling

of regret for the loss of anything that possibly could be gotten out of those schools. I regard them as practically worthless. I really think it would have been better if my 'father had granted my request and kept me at home. I am inclined to the opinion that I got out of them all that was possible, and all that other boys did realize. The chief benefit one received came from contact. I often think that children get more of intellectual and spiritual growth from their plays and consequent contact than from their books and instruction. This part of my early training was abundant and efficient.

My schoolmates and associates were not, as a rule, bad or vicious. Like all boys and girls, they were fond of play, and in this we all indulged as freely as opportunity offered both in and out of school. For both, we had rare faculties. Not that these were purposely provided by the district or school officers but the environment was such that we were able to appropriate them to ourselves. We had no school grounds provided for play. I suppose that land at that time and in that locality might have been five or ten dollars an acre, and the trustees felt that they could not afford sufficient land for such a useless purpose as a play-ground. To avoid any expense of this kind, they placed the school-house on the refuse of one of the asheries to which I have already referred. The boundaries of this old ash-heap determined the boundaries of the school lot provided by the district.

In the schoolroom itself we entertained ourselves in discussing such rude pictures as we found in our spellers and readers and geographies. Thus we thumbed out the books, but never really studied them. If a picture interested us,



we would read to find what was said about it. In this way I read over and over again what the old man said to the saucy boy in the apple tree and the boy's treatment of the matter. In the geography, the polar bear interested me very much, and I literally carved him up with my jack-knife.

Every child, old or young, had for his stock reading the old English reader. There was little in it that I understood, but I had gone over it so many times, having the words pronounced for me and hearing others pronounce them, that I had learned everything by heart; and being of the opinion that the one that read the fastest was the best reader, I used to rattle it off as fast as I could make my tongue go. Not understanding the meaning of anything I read, and having caught wrong pronunciation from hearing others read, I discovered, later in life, that I had made some very ridiculous mistakes. One I remember, in a quotation from the Bible which reads, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?"—but which I always read at school, "Is thy servant *bedaubed* that he should do this thing?" This I suppose I must have read, or more properly recited, so rapidly, that the teacher never discovered the mistake. I do not remember to have been directly taught anything or to have received criticism on anything.

I was always interested in what was going on in the schoolroom. When any punishment was to be inflicted I was all eyes and ears to know all about it, and there were some very unique things done in this line. Whipping with the rod and ferule were of so common occurrence that they became rather stale and commonplace, unless some new feature came in. This sometimes occurred. I remember

the case of my cousin Jabez Ward, who was sent by the master to get a beech whip with which to take a chastisement. He came in with a fine efficient-looking whip, but he had taken the precaution to cut it almost through, in a number of places, so that as the master should strike with it, it would readily fall apart. The master discovered this trick, and sent him for another and gave him a double dose.

Another boy who got frequent whippings, managed to put on several waistcoats, one over the other, in this way thinking to pad himself 'for the blows. He was obliged to remove one after another until the whip could be made to feel on the skin.

A few teachers with more fertility of device, introduced some quite ingenious penalties. A troublesome boy was placed between two girls, and a troublesome girl between two boys. The punishment consisted in the ridicule brought down on the culprit's head by the school. But for this derisive laugh, one might have thought that this would be a very agreeable chastisement.

Another penalty was to stand and hold some heavy object, as a book, in the hand, with the arm stretched out at full length. When the arm faltered some reminder from the master would bring it up to place. In time, this pose became very painful. Another method, similar in its effect, was to require the recreant to stand with legs erect and bend the body over at the hips, stretch out the arm to its fullest extent, and place one finger on a nail in the floor, with the pretense of holding it in place so that it should not come out; if he began to lop down in any way, a sharp blow 'from the ruler would bring him into position. In time, too, this became exceedingly painful.

One master would place the boy on the toe of his shoe with the leg crossed over the knee and toss him up and down a few times, and then with a vigorous toss of the foot, throw him into the air and leave him to descend by the force of gravity, to the floor, with a heavy thud. Another device, by the same master, was a gallows, consisting of a strong rope suspended from the ceiling and coming down about to the heads of ordinary boys. When a serious case had to be dealt with the culprit was placed under the rope and the master would then take from his pocket a large, strong, red silk handkerchief and begin to twist it into the form of a rope, talking in the meantime to the boy as though his end was near, to prepare his mind for the final event so near at hand. The handkerchief would be adjusted to the boy's neck and when he began to feel the pull on his throat, the effect the master desired to make on the boy was considered satisfactory and a reprieve was granted. Of course, this scheme soon wore out and some other device had to be substituted. Another master was reported as kicking his pupils in punishment, but I was never an eye-witness to this proceeding.

Personally, I never suffered very seriously from the school punishments. The worst thing that happened to me in this line was to be caught by the collar and thrown through the air backward into the middle of the floor, landing on the back of my head in a way that stunned me.

The arrangement of the seats was on this wise: we had no desks proper, but around the outside of the room against the wall ran a pine board, sixteen or eighteen inches wide, with front edge an inch or two lower than the rear edge. This served as writing-desk or support for the books when

“studying.” In front of this shelf were arranged pine benches without backs on which to sit. All the pupils had to do when they wished to face the wall was to throw their feet over this bench or get them over as best they could. When sitting at the writing desk in this way, our backs were toward the master. Lower benches were arranged around the room for the younger children.

One of the rules of the school was that there should be no eating of fruit in the schoolroom. At recess I had been eating an apple, and when the rap on the window called us in, I came promptly, with some of the apple I had been eating still in my mouth. I took my seat, facing the wall. The next thing that happened to me I have already stated. I went home, not to return for some days, not until the teacher had apologized to my father for his rude, hasty treatment of a boy innocent of any serious offense.

The only other punishment at school to which I remember having taken any particular exception, was the requirement of the teacher that I should kiss my great toe. The fact that the teacher was a cousin made the demand none the less offensive. It is true I had just performed the act of my own accord as a bit of fun, which led the teacher to require a repetition of the performance as a punishment. The conditions were very different. In the one case it was a voluntary act entered into to amuse my seatmates, and in the other case it was forced upon myself for the amusement of the teacher and the ridicule of companions.

As a rule, instruments of punishment were kept on hand ready for use. In the teacher's desk securely locked were whips, ferules, fool's caps and dunce-blocks, so that no time need be lost for the application while the temper was

still hot. This particular teacher who was so ingenious in his method of punishment, was also ingenious in other directions. He believed in keeping his school wide awake, a feature in which he succeeded very well. Among other tricks he resorted to when things got a little dull, was to have the school drop everything and spell the 'following words in concert: *Ho, no, hono-; ri, honori; fi, honorifi-; ca, honorifica-; bi, honorificabi-; li, honorificabili; to, honorificabilito-; ti, honorificabilitoti-; bus, honorificabilitotibus-; que, honorificabilitotibusque*. Every syllable spelled was pronounced by itself and then added to the preceding syllables, and the word so far as completed was pronounced and the last syllable was long drawn out with a tremendous squeal. This was always entered into with great gusto, and was sure to wake up all drowsy souls.

The "spelling school" was a characteristic feature of these old-time country schools, and one that especially interested me. Not the spelling, at all. I didn't care a fig about learning to spell. I utterly despised learning of all kinds. I regarded grammatical forms of speech as stilted, bombastic, "set up." The dialect of the neighborhood was good enough for me. I was interested in the evening spelling schools on account of their social element, their jolly fellowship, and particularly because they afforded an opportunity of "going home with the girls."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE BOY ON THE FARM

I HAVE no remembrance of a cross or unkind word that ever passed between my father and mother. They were uniformly respectful, kind, and loving toward each other.

We children had a genuine affection for our parents and never thought of disobeying them. Our father said little, but when he spoke, his words were like orders to us. My mother was more social in her nature and talked more freely. She was intelligent, she was well educated for a woman in her time, and she talked good sense. We had a feeling of reverence for both parents.

All our domestic habits were very simple, our diet was plain, but everything was wholesome and well-cooked. Our meats were largely salt pork and beef, with an occasional cod or salmon. Fresh meat came in occasionally. The meats were mostly fried for breakfast and boiled for dinner. For supper, we often had dried beef cooked in a delicious milk gravy. Of this we never tired. Milk was abundant and we used it freely. In the season of currants and raspberries, I enjoyed nothing better than a bowl of bread and milk with currants or other berries. We were also fond of jellies and honey, of which we always had an abundant supply. Pies, doughnuts, and cookies were al-



THE NEW HOME AT PERRY.





ways on hand. We never thought of closing any meal without a piece of pie.

Cold water was our only beverage, except that my mother had an occasional cup of tea, or of homemade barley coffee. This was made by scorching barley and grinding it, and using it the same as coffee. It was a palatable and nourishing drink. My father used no tobacco or spirituous beverages of any kind. As a family it might have been said of us very truly and in a literal sense that we were every one of us tee-totalers.

Our clothing was always of the plainest and most substantial kind, largely homemade. Our best suits were worn only on Sundays or rare social occasions. We put them on Sunday morning after the chores were done and the horses harnessed and doffed them immediately on reaching home after the church services. They were carefully put away in a dark closet, where they were safe from dust and moths. In this way they lasted a long time, sometimes until we quite outgrew them and the fashion was left far behind.

This careful economy brought thrift and the old house, in due time, gave place to a new and better one. We were many years accumulating the materials for the new house. Logs were cut in the woods and drawn to the saw-mill in the neighborhood, already alluded to, and out of these were sawn boards and the smaller pieces of timber for various uses in the construction of the new house. The heavy timbers were cut and hewn in the woods. The pine lumber we went to Portage Falls to get, nine miles away.

At last, after some years of gathering materials and other preparations, we were ready to raise the frame of the new house. The thing now in order was a "raising bee." All

able-bodied men within the compass of a mile or two were invited to the bee. Great preparations were made for this grand occasion—one of the most important in the life of a farmer. All the good things the housewife could devise were prepared in its honor. Cakes in great variety, the richest and the best that could be made, lemonade and other “soft drinks” were provided.

The bee over, the finishing of the house went on, slowly—very slowly. It was a long time before it was completed. My father was very particular to have everything well done, and the carpenter, a slow mortal at best, took his own time for it.

The one thing about the house for which my father had the most care, was the chimney with the accompanying fireplace. In the old house was a liberal fireplace with its cranes and hooks and chains, and the new one must be built on a still more liberal and better plan. At the end—what was his disappointment to find that the chimney smoked! This was a sore trial to my father. It had to be reconstructed and made to “draw.”

This new fireplace would hold, at a low estimate, an eighth of a cord of wood prepared for the purpose. This wood was piled up at the side of the fireplace ready for the morning fire. There was a “back log,” and the “little back log” designed to go on the top of the big one. Then there was a fore stick, a log of no mean dimensions, and between this and the back logs was ample space for filling in with the small wood. When once fully afire, this pile made an astonishing blaze, with intense heat.

The crane was strong and ample for holding the kettles, large and small, that were required for cooking and other

housekeeping purposes. Generous provision was made for a brick oven in which to do the baking of the household. A smaller fireplace was arranged in the bedroom intended for my father and mother.

I remember well when all these gave way to the modern stove. With this change came much of increased comfort and reduction of labor, but at the same time there was a loss that we all felt, and none more than my father and the children, who always enjoyed the bright, cheerful blazing fire. It is true that in cold weather we found it difficult to warm more than one side at a time: but what of that?—we could readily change sides, and there was a pleasant glow of warmth from the open fire that the stove never gives. However, considerations of economy and labor-saving prevailed, and the old-fashioned fireplace and brick oven had to be sacrificed for the introduction of more modern methods in heating and baking.

Before the advent of the stove and range, we used as a partial substitute for the old brick oven, a tin oven, a sort of reflector that was placed before the open fireplace, in which were set the loaves of bread or pies to be baked. It was so constructed with flaring sides and top, as to catch the rays of heat and concentrate them on the contents of the oven. This was a sort of connecting link between the brick oven and the stove, and as such served a very good purpose. Then came in, too, the open Franklin stove, which was placed in the parlor, a room only used on state occasions. It was, indeed, a very meager substitute for the fireplace as its capacity for wood was scarcely one-tenth that of the latter. It gave, however, an open fire, and in this way reminded one of by-gones.

Under the whole house was a superb cellar. That was the place where the vegetables, fruits, meats, and other necessary supplies for the household were stored. This was always well filled, and it was a sight well calculated to make a farmer quite contented, to go into the cellar after the apples, potatoes, and other vegetables were stored away for winter use. There was the cider barrel, the vinegar barrel, the pork barrel, the beef barrel, the barrel of apple sauce, the great bins filled to overflowing with such apples as are seldom seen now-a-days, in every variety, and the great potato bin with its ample store. I have rarely seen such a sight as my father's cellar presented in those halcyon days. All this greatly added to our comfort and convenience, and my father and mother lived many years to enjoy these hard-earned enlargements.

My mother was an excellent cook, made all our butter and cheese, with some to spare for the market, to be exchanged for groceries or other household necessities. She also made soap, spun and wove the linen cloth for the bags, towels, and much of the summer wear of the household, besides many of the woolen garments worn by the children and other members of the household. Some of these garments, both in linen and in wool, constituted an important item of the outfit of the boy when he went to college. She looked after the wardrobe of the family, washing, ironing, mending the clothing, and darning the stockings.

All this our mother did with occasional outside help, added to what assistance was rendered by my sister, who was never well or strong. Mother was always the last in the house to retire, and much of her needle-work was done

while we were in bed. To us, she seemed a remarkable woman—one in a thousand. I have yet to see a better ordered, better kept, better fed, and, as a whole, more desirable domestic household than that over which my mother and father presided.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE BOY ON THE FARM

MY FATHER and mother were Calvinists of the New England type. Next to the Bible, my father placed Dr. Emmons' sermons, a complete set of whose works he presented to each of his children. He usually read one of these sermons aloud to the assembled family every Sabbath afternoon. Dr. Spring of New York, and Dr. Weeks were also among his favorite teachers. He firmly believed and stoutly advocated their doctrines, and rejected everything that did not agree with them. Naturally enough, the children, with their confidence and respect for their parents, never questioned the points held by them.

The sovereignty of God, His immutable decrees, His foreknowledge, foreordination and election, the necessity of faith in Christ, repentance, and sanctification, to salvation, formed the meat on which we were fed. Rightly interpreted and understood, I doubt whether there is any escape from the conclusions to which these doctrines led. At any rate, such was our faith, and having been so trained, it never ceases to influence our minds and our lives.

Believing as I did the necessity for regeneration, or change of heart, for salvation, I longed for the experience indicative of such a change. We always went to church regularly, never omitting any church service, fair weather

or stormy. I gave such respectful attention to the sermon and other services as a boy could give. I honestly desired to be rightly affected by them, and although I realized little impression made upon my mind or heart by all that minister said, out of respect to him I kept my eyes fixed on him, so far as I was able to keep awake; and I distinctly remember at least one occasion when I thought I ought to be deeply affected, even to tears, but was not. I did what I could to give the minister the impression that I was so affected, by wetting my fingers in my mouth, and with them my eyes, thinking in this way to give the appearance of tears.

It was not until many years later, when quite a well-grown youth, that I thought any real change of heart came to me. It was then that new emotions came into my soul. I felt as I had not felt before. A spiritual element entered into my life which I had not previously realized. Even the external world, itself, put on a coloring that I had not seen before. I saw myself in a new light. My heart was filled with joy and rejoicing. What I had so long desired had come to me. I now realized myself a Christian. It was not, however, considered safe to admit a new convert into the church until sufficient time had been given in which to test the genuineness of the conversion. In due time, after a year or so, in 1840, when I was seventeen years of age, I was received into the Congregational Church at Ferry Center.

From this time on, I read many religious books of a highly spiritual order—books that were well calculated to search the heart and test the genuineness of the spiritual life. Measured by these tests, I felt that I had not the proper evidence of a change of heart, and that I had no right

to a membership in the church of Christ, and asked to have my name stricken from the church roll. I was informed by the pastor that this could not be done so long as there was no outward act that made me liable to discipline. As I had no inclination to commit such acts, no alternative was left me but to let the whole matter rest as it was, and I continued a member in good fellowship.

At home we always had family prayers in the morning immediately after breakfast, and on Sabbath afternoons before sunset. With us, in accordance with New England custom, the Sabbath began with the going down of the sun on Saturday night and ended with its setting on Sunday night. Before sunset on Saturday night, all the farm work was laid aside; the milking of the cows, the care of the stock, and all chores were "done up," and when the sun was down we were all supposed to be quiet in the house, and religious reading of some sort was in order. No whistling or secular songs, or light or trifling conversation were allowed between the two setting suns. I well remember as a small boy, how I used to go out and watch the last ray of the setting sun as it disappeared below the horizon on Sabbath night. I was then set free to play as much as I pleased. This was the night of the week for social gatherings and the frolics of the children. This custom held sway for many years after I left home and had a family of my own.

Brought up in such a home, it is not a matter of wonder that the old man thus trained as a boy, is not given to Sunday parties, Sunday dinners, Sunday riding, or secular occupations of any kind. The old proverb, "Train up a child



in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," has proven true in my case at least. At three score years and ten and three more, I find myself inclined to the beliefs and practices in which I was trained.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

THUS far I have endeavored to give an account of what came to me as a boy on the farm. At the turning point between youth and young manhood, a circumstance occurred that changed the plans of my whole life, and turned all my ambitions into an entirely new channel. When I was seventeen, Mr. Charles Huntington, just out of college, came to Perry Center and opened a private school. Into this school were gathered most of the young men and women of the town in the immediate vicinity. Here for the first time I became interested in books, and began to study.

Mr. Huntington had the power to arouse enthusiasm in his pupils, and he it was who first waked me up and aroused in me new aspirations. I found new acquaintances, and among them was John D. Higgins, whose mother resided at Perry Village, two miles away. The inspiration of the teachers had given to him also, as well as to many another boy in this school, new life and ambition. He became a frequent visitor at our house, and one day, as we were coming down the street talking over our life plans, we mutually agreed that an education was the thing 'for which we ought to strive; and we then and there resolved that we would bend our efforts in this direction, and get such an education as a college would give us. Stopping in the middle of the

road, we shook hands over this resolution, and from this purpose we never swerved.

Up to this time I had detested both books and the school, and as a consequence I had no intellectual equipment. My father had always urged me to go to school, and I had as persistently urged to be allowed to stay at home and work on the farm. All at once my father's and my ideas were reversed. I had now come to an age when I could make myself very useful on the 'farm, and my father desired my services, and wanted to make a farmer of me. My younger brother, I was told by the farm hands, was destined to be a scholar and a doctor, and I a farmer; an arrangement, as I now look back upon it, very natural for my parents to make, for my brother had shown much more taste and aptitude for books than I, while I had shown more skill and interest in farming. So now my father wanted me to stay at home on the farm just when I wanted to go to school.

I had become so thoroughly in earnest in my desire for an education that, being naturally headstrong and persistent, I set about it with a full determination to accomplish it. 'A man living two or three miles 'from our house, who sometimes did work for my father, had a Latin grammar and dictionary, which he offered to lend me. This offer I eagerly accepted, lost no time in going for them, and began the study of Latin in earnest. Seeing that my purpose was fully set in this direction, and accepting the advice of my teacher, my father no longer objected or put obstacles in my way, but, on the contrary, gave me every possible aid in his power. My elementary education had been wholly neglected, and I had much to do in repairing the loss that

had just come to my comprehension; what my father had said so often, came true—I was reaping the fruits of my early neglect, to my sorrow.

“Brother John,” as I now called my new friend, and I took a room together in the upper gable end of a shoeshop, where he had been learning his trade, and we settled down to earnest work in preparation for entering college. We were pretty well matched in taste and natural ability, and we worked together most harmoniously. So our academic life passed on in a very agreeable way. I slept at home, and he in the shop, except on the nights when he went home to stay with me. On going to school, I would fill my pockets with apples, and divide with “Brother John,” and when he went home with me at night, we always paid a visit to the cellar, where we feasted on honey and apples.

Our progress as students was not rapid, but we applied ourselves earnestly and patiently, and so got on fairly well. “Brother John’s” talent was rather for writing, and mine for speaking. He occasionally wrote articles for country papers, and I attended all the debating societies, took an active part in the public exercises of the school, and especially in all the exhibitions and dialogues, of which there were not a few. In this way, I got a little local reputation as an actor and speaker, which greatly flattered my pride and ambition, and I formed the resolution to prepare myself for the bar and public positions. My chum resolved to purchase a Webster’s dictionary and give himself the task of learning the orthography and meaning of every word, from beginning to end, the better to serve his purpose as a writer.

We have both lived long enough to be amused at our resolutions and realize their ‘folly. Like many another youth-

ful ambition, they were soon left behind. Of the two, my chum's undertaking was the more herculean, and sooner found its end. My tenacity led me to hold on to my ambition until circumstances quite beyond my control cut off all my plans.

These were not the only resolutions that were formed by one or the other, or both, that met with an untimely end. One time "Brother John" resolved that he would not be bothered with a razor all his life, and providing himself with a pair of tweezers, began to pull out every hair by the roots as fast as it appeared on his face. I cannot say how long he persevered in his undertaking, but I imagine about as long as in his resolution to devour Webster's Unabridged Dictionary.

Early one summer we resolved to introduce a new style in the cut of coats. We were both to buy the same material and have full summer suits just alike in every respect. The coats were cutaways, just such as are now worn. I have never thought we introduced this fashion, but with us it was certainly original, for we had never seen such a garment, and no one had suggested the idea to us. I had my suit made according to agreement, and came sailing up the aisle of the academy one Monday morning, greatly amusing both pupils and teachers. I shall never forget how completely I demoralized the dignity of Mr. Huntington, when his eye first caught sight of me. But I was not to be laughed out of what seemed to me a sensible idea, and went on wearing the cutaway until it was worn out.

When John saw how our idea took, his heart failed him, and he never appeared in his suit. In other words, he broke

the contract, and I had to live down the ridicule single-handed.

It was not, however, characteristic of my chum to break his agreements, and especially in more important matters. It is a rare individual who can breast public sentiment in matters of fashion and dress. This was more than my chum was competent to undertake, and very likely had he been the one first to appear in this new costume, I should have hesitated to follow, but once having committed myself, I was the last one to retreat. I had too much pride and spunk for this. Stubbornness was characteristic of me as a boy, a trait that never entirely left me.

It was about this time that we formed our resolution to go through college together, a pledge from which, as I have said, we never wavered, although circumstances quite beyond my control prevented the full completion of my course. From this time on, everything was made to bend to the accomplishment of our purpose. John helped to carry himself through his preparatory course by work at the shoemaker's bench. The only assistance I was able to render him was to furnish him with all the apples he could eat, with which I always filled my pockets to overflowing every morning, and of which he always had a liberal share. I suppose that his family friends must have done for him more than I knew, for I can hardly conceive that his expenses were fully provided for by the work he did at his trade, or by the proceeds of a singing school he occasionally taught. As for myself, I lived at home and was there provided with necessary clothing and books.

During a short period of this preparatory course, I occupied the office of our town physician, Dr. Ward, as a place

of study during the day, with my cousin, Stewart Sheldon, who had also decided to prepare for college. This physician was a man of no ordinary character. He was the only doctor in our part of the town and was known 'far and near. He had the confidence and respect of everybody, and left the impress of his strong character upon the church and people generally. I shall never forget the shock that was felt in the assembled congregation one Sabbath morning, when his death was announced. Everybody in that congregation was a personal friend and a mourner. Although in some ways odd and peculiar, both in manner and ideas, he had a warm heart and tender affections.

I came very near this man, and he had an important influence on my life and character.

The man, however, who had the most to do with my life, was my teacher, C. A. Huntington. I may truthfully say that he made me what I proved to be and to him I owe a debt of gratitude I shall never be able fully to express. But for him I should have died on the farm, unlettered, and my influence would have been greatly circumscribed. What was true in my case was also true of many another Perry boy, who, through his influence, went out into the broad world to make himself felt in a large way.

## CHAPTER IX

### INTRODUCTION TO COLLEGE LIFE: COLLEGE ASSOCIATIONS: 1844

IT WAS in the autumn of 1844 that four of these boys left together for Hamilton College, with such meager preparation as we had been able to make in four short years. I can say for myself that my elementary English education was pretty much left out, and judging from the answers given by some of my comrades at our entrance examination, in President North's house, I would infer that the same thing was true of them. I recall one of these questions and answers. The President asked one of my associates to locate the river Nile. This he readily did, but in a very different quarter 'from that in which the Creator placed it, for he put it somewhere in South America. Whether all our answers were as wide of the mark or not, I will not at this distance of time undertake to say, but my presumption is that it was not altogether an exceptional case.

I am of the opinion that the decision to admit us was made before the examination, and that our failure or success in answering questions had very little to do with our acceptance. At any rate, we four Perry boys, John D. Higgins, Stewart Sheldon, Henry Butler, and myself, were admitted in spite of our poor preparation. Three of us were cousins, and John, as I have said, I called brother.

This going to college was a great event in our lives. It



was much more so to boys in that day than it is now, and more to us and our immediate families than to many others. I started out with the ambitious intention of spending four years in college and three years in a law school. This to my boyish mind seemed a long, long time, and I so expressed myself to my good minister whose reply I well remember. He said, "Take your knapsack and go ahead; and when, at the end of your course, you look back, it will seem shorter to you than it does now." Although I never reached the end of the course I had laid out for myself, I went far enough to make it evident to me that the minister was right. I have always found the prospective end farther away than the retrospective beginning.

That day of departure from the dear old home and its loved ones brought to me a strange mixture of emotions. My father had asked the minister to be present at the time of my leaving, and had selected the thirty-third chapter of Exodus to be read, probably having in mind the sentiment contained in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth verses. After the final meal had been taken, all were gathered round the 'family altar; the minister read the chosen chapter, and led in prayer. It was an impressive occasion, never to be forgotten. I have always regarded this as an epoch in my life.

No other event of my life so thoroughly stirred all that was in me. The scenes and activities that I was leaving behind, and those that lay before me, into which I was about to enter, were well calculated to awaken emotion of no ordinary character.

The large, square trunk, that had been made for this purpose, was filled to its utmost capacity with such wear-

ing apparel as had been prepared largely by my mother, some of these garments being spun and woven by her own hands ; together with such other articles of convenience and comfort as loving hearts could devise and anticipate. As the last loving kisses were being given and good-byes said, my father moved off to the wagon that stood waiting for me, followed the team along to the gate, that he might be the last, as it would seem, to press the hand and say good-bye. That last warm pressure of the hand and the tears that trickled down the furrowed cheeks are as 'fresh in my memory as though it were but yesterday. The wagon moved on, and a few last, lingering glances left the old home out of sight.

I was not on my way to a railroad station, but to Cuyler-ville, six miles away, where the boats on the Genesee Valley canal stopped to take on freight and passengers. At Rochester this canal intersected the Erie canal. At Cuyler-ville I was met by Brother John and my cousins.

This was our first ride on any public conveyance. To have gone by rail would have been possible, but for the expense. The packet boat was much cheaper, and our limited means made it necessary to economize at every point. We had good company, for the packet boats were patronized by very many people who had more money than we, and who were well conditioned in life. Everything was new and interesting to us boys ; the canal with its locks, the boat with its crew, the villages and cities through which we passed. We were probably about twenty-four hours in reaching Oneida, a small village near Syracuse, where we landed, and took stage across the country to College Hill.

At Oneida we were met by a very nice, polite, and oblig-

ing student named Willoughby. So obliging was he that he came on purpose to meet us, show us the way to the college, help us to select a room and a boarding-place, and to introduce us to the president and other members of the faculty, and to various students we happened to meet, especially to those who belonged to a particular literary society, which he very kindly advised us to join, for very good reasons, which he made plain to us. Not until we had been in college some time, were we able to divine the possible motive that led this young man to give us such marked attention, valuable assistance, and good advice. We joined his society, of course, and to him this was doubtless full compensation for all his trouble. Both parties were very well satisfied; he had a motive that was gratified, and we were benefited by the result.

We were located in "North College, South Hall, first floor back middle." Off the main room was a bedroom with a double bed; our rooms were taken care of by the college janitor, a jolly Irishman by the name of "Terry." His official title was "Professor of Dust and Ashes." His duty was to make the beds, sweep the rooms, and remove the ashes. He was inclined to be funny, was always good-natured, and, as a rule, the boys were a match for him.

Brother John was strongly inclined to stick to the bed until quite late in the morning, so one bed sometimes went unmade for many days in succession. He was usually able to persuade Terry to let him alone, and have his sleep out. On one occasion, however, the bed had got into so bad a condition that it could be neglected no longer, and the "Professor" gave Brother John warning that the next morning, if he found him in bed when he came around, he

would pull him out. The next morning he found, as he supposed, Brother John in bed. He grabbed for him, when behold, he found in his hand an image, instead of the real person he had thought to lay hold of. At the same moment Brother John sprang out from behind the bedroom door, where he lay secreted, caught Terry by the heels and threw him into the bed. Terry took it in good part as a smart joke, but gave the perpetrator notice that he must not play the "likes" on him again. The next morning, as he came around, he looked cautiously into the room, and having scanned the bed and found it empty, looked suspiciously behind the door, where to his great delight he discovered what he supposed to be Brother John secreted in the dark corner behind the door. The bedrooms had no windows, but were lighted only by the door from the study-room. Here again he mistook the image for the reality, and triumphantly grabbed it, greatly to his chagrin. Having been outwitted by Brother John on these two occasions, he gave up all thought of playing any more tricks on him, and Brother John thereafter had his morning naps to his heart's content. When the bed got into such bad condition that one-half of it oozed out at the foot, he would give Terry a chance to make it up.

In one way, and one only, as I remember, John and I did not make very well-mated chums. He retired late and rose late in the morning, while I retired regularly at nine o'clock and rose invariably at four. My first exercise in the morning was to take a shower bath. This was done with no regard to the weather. Many a time have I broken the ice in the pail that held the water for the bath, with my heel, poured the contents into the box over my head, and

pulled the string that discharged them over my head and body. It may seem like heroic treatment, but I survived it.

During the winter months, I often spent an hour sawing wood out of doors, for which the college paid me fifty cents a cord. The pay was small, but it was something to a poor boy, and gave me healthful exercise, which paid better.

We lived in a very economical way, as our limited means required. We boarded at Mrs. Quinn's, a short distance from the college, where we paid a dollar a week for board. The food was plain, but wholesome, and we did not suffer. For the rent of the room, I gave my notes or my father's, I really forget which. These notes were paid long after leaving college. As a rule, we purchased second-hand books, and with my clothing and bedding furnished from home, I managed to get on in a very inexpensive way.

I had not been in college long, before I was invited to become a member of the Alpha Delta Phi Society. This I felt to be a great compliment. This society was composed of the most scholarly and best elements in the college, and I did not hesitate to accept the honor proffered me. The plan adopted at the time of the organization of the society was, not to select members during the first two years in college, or until they had been proven and known by the society. As there were rival societies, however, they sometimes took men earlier, to avoid the risk of losing them to other fraternities. Such selections were *sub rosa*, and the persons so selected were not allowed to wear the pin or "swing out," as it was called, until the Sophomore year.

Not being known as an "Alpha Delta Phi," another society courted my membership. In this way, being often seen in the society of some of the leading members, a doubt was

pretty effectively thrown over the minds of my comrades, as to my true society relations. This effort to cover my true relation to the Greek letter societies I have never ceased to regret. Little things were done, more or less deceptive in their character, which were not consistent with my ideals of manhood. The act that has caused me more regret than any other, was the separation from my chum, my dearest 'friend on earth. It was not consistent with the idea of secrecy that I should room with one who was not a member of the same fraternity. It was therefore arranged that I should leave Brother John and room with a brother of Professor North, who was an Alpha Delta Phi. To this I consented, an act for which I can never forgive myself. Not that my new chum was in any way disagreeable or in any way unworthy of my companionship, for, on the contrary, he was a most delightful companion, a highly respectable and worthy young man, the soul of integrity and uprightness, an exemplary Christian, and the leader of his class in scholarship; but to leave an old friend and tried friend for a new one, has always seemed to me one of the most dishonorable acts of my life, one which never ceases to awaken a feeling of shame and reproach every time it comes into my mind.

Other acts growing out of this effort to keep up the idea in college that the Alpha Delta Phi Society did not choose its members before Sophomore year, were not so serious in their character, but at the same time were questionable as to their influence on me. It was regarded as a matter of the highest importance that my attendance on the meetings of the society should not be known; otherwise the reputation of the society for carefulness in the selection of its

members might receive harm. To avoid any suspicion, instead of going straight to the place of meeting, I would start in a different direction, and by wandering round through the woods and cornfields, come to the place of meeting. This was a sort of deception, perhaps harmless, because no one other than myself was affected by it, but such methods were not up to my ideas of manhood.

Nevertheless, my association with the members of this 'fraternity was of great value to me. I would not have lost the good that came to me through the close contact with the young men who composed this society, for any consideration. I value it above all other good I got out of my college life. They were strong men, possessed of high ideals and noble aspirations, and they brought into my life that which I never could get from the study of books. Among them were men who have taken high positions in the civil, religious, and literary world. I have always been proud of and thankful for their companionship.

Early in my college course I discovered something about myself that, curiously enough, I had never known before. I noticed that I could not see work on the board that other members of my class seemed to see readily. This led me to the suspicion that I was near-sighted. When convinced that this was true, I lost no time in bringing to my aid a pair of glasses. It was in the early spring that I went to Utica, nine miles away, and provided myself with these helps to see. On returning to College Hill, I went to the fourth story of one of the college buildings, to look out upon the world which I had never really seen before. It was on a bright spring morning, just after a refreshing shower. The trees and the hills were delicately green with the new life

of the season. From my point of observation I commanded a wide stretch of landscape. In the beautiful valley a mile below, lay the pretty village of Clinton, and beyond, stretching away to the distant horizon, lay a range of high hills covered with the fresh verdure of spring. As I looked out on this grand sweep of landscape, I felt more like flying than anything else. As I beheld the world for the first time in the beauty of springtime, I was filled with an ecstasy of delight. I now realized as never before what a glorious world I lived in. From that time to this I have never been without my glasses, except that at first when returning to my Perry home, I would doff them and put them in my pocket to avoid possible remarks from my good country friends.

I kept them in their hiding place at all times when likely to be observed, until I left the bounds of Perry neighborhood. This was doubtless a foolish pride, but one that a timid boy is very likely to feel.



## CHAPTER X

### COLLEGE LIFE

THE scholastic work in college was almost exclusively of a bookish character and confined very largely to the languages and mathematics. Very little was done in science, and that little was in Chemistry. It was pretty generally thought by the students that if we had our pictures taken by the professor of this department, paying for the same the sum of three dollars, we should be safe from rejection in this subject. For me this seemed the easiest and surest way out, and I had my picture taken. It was a daguerreotype, the only mode of taking pictures at that day, and it was then quite new. This picture is well preserved to this day. How much this transaction had to do with my passing out of Chemistry, no one will ever know, but of one thing I am certain, I got "out" of the subject without knowing anything about it; and my case was not different from that of most students.

Occasionally, one especially interested in the subject would offer his services to the professor and work in the laboratory with him, and so get something out of it. With all others it was of no service whatever to them.

In the languages and mathematics we had good teachers, and thorough work was done. Work in the languages was confined mostly to the Latin and Greek. Very little was

done in German and French. Under Professor Mandeville we had very good instruction in reading and elocution, although taught in a somewhat perfunctory manner. The professor dictated, and the class wrote out his dictations. His plan of work was original and philosophical. His analysis of the English sentence and his method of punctuation was founded in nature, and for this reason has never been surpassed, in my judgment. It is unfortunate that it has not met with more general recognition and adoption. It may be regarded as somewhat stilted and complicated, but if the spirit of freedom were thrown into it, I think these objections would vanish.

This was at the time when Professor Mandeville was bringing out his series of school readers. He was just negotiating with the Appletons to publish the series. He was invited by the publishers to go to New York with two or three of his students to meet a few distinguished gentlemen—divines, lawyers, and other educated men—to explain and illustrate his method of teaching reading as contained in his books. Another student and I were chosen to go with him on this mission. This was a grand opportunity for an unsophisticated, green boy to travel and see the greatest city on our continent. To us boys it was indeed a great occasion.

It was in the month of June, and on a warm day, when we landed in New York. I had never before been in a great city, and very naturally was extremely interested in everything, all being so new to me. To my sorrow, I was tempted into tasting the great varieties of fruits and other goodies so abundantly displayed in the shops and at the street stands. As a natural consequence, I was con-

fined for a day at my hotel, to recover from the effects of my indulgence.

After the first day I was domiciled at the home of Mr. Appleton. I was given a large, elegantly furnished room, such as I had never seen before. This was a new ilfe to me, and withal somewhat bewildering. I did not know how to act in my new conditions. So long as I was left alone in my room I could get along very well, but when I came to the beautifully appointed table with its various courses, its (to me) many new dishes and methods of serving, I was put to my wit's end to know how to behave myself. I kept my eye out to see what others did, and then imitated them as well as I could.

I well remember my first experience with the egg-cup. I observed that all put their eggs into the cup, broke the upper end and seasoned and ate the egg from its broken end. To me this seemed a somewhat difficult and delicate performance; but as all did it with so much ease and grace, I resolved to risk the undertaking. Greatly to my delight and satisfaction, I made a success of it and came off, somewhat to my surprise, without any mishap.

This was my first appearance in *élite* society, and it afforded an admirable opportunity to learn many things. I do not remember about the finger-bowls. I think it must be that they did not appear on this occasion, otherwise I should have been saved a mortifying experience on a subsequent occasion, when at a crowded dinner table in a fine hotel in Philadelphia, curious to know what the apparently high-colored liquid was that was placed at our plates, and supposing it must be some delicious beverage, I put it to my lips to drink. I never after used a finger-bowl with-

out being reminded of the embarrassment which taught me their use.

The most trying hour, however, for a poor, timid country boy was yet to come—the appearance before the committee of gentlemen selected by the publishers to test our ability to read and to explain the principles of good reading according to Professor Mandeville. This meeting was in the grand parlor of Mr. Appleton's home. I remember more distinctly than anything else how very small and utterly insignificant I seemed to myself in the presence of those august gentlemen. I think I must have nearly lost my head. I only remember that we read and were questioned, and I infer that we did our part to their entire satisfaction, inasmuch as the Appletons bought the copyright of the Mandeville readers, paying for the same, as I was told, five thousand dollars; more money, I am inclined to believe, than they ever realized out of their sale. They met with very sharp competition in books that were less philosophical, and so more easily used by teachers who did not care to spend their time studying up new theories and plans of work.

Having accomplished the object of our mission, we started 'for home, embarking on one of the elegant Hudson River steamers. It was a bright, starry night, with a mild, soft air, most grateful to one who had been spending the day in a hot city. All the conditions were strongly inviting to sit on deck and enjoy the charming scenery of the Hudson as it passed before us in panoramic view. The full moon shone out in its glory, lighting up the whole landscape, giving it that soft, bewitching charm that the moonlight only can bestow. In the very midst of all this there came up a slight shower, and for the first and last time in

my life I saw a beautiful lunar rainbow. This was the crowning display of all the new and interesting sights I had seen on this trip.

There is something about the atmosphere of college life that tends to put the spirit of mischief into the ordinary boy. One is likely to feel that he has not done his whole duty in college until he has played some trick. I was not wholly free from inspirations to this kind of fun, but my jokes were very few, simple, and harmless. Nobody was any the worse for them. Brother John was much more ingenious and successful than I.

My associates were not, as a rule, given to college pranks. The only exception, so far as our fraternity was concerned, as I remember, was little Joe Avery, the son of Professor Avery. There had been a time-honored custom of "ringing off the rust" at the end of the freshman year—that is, ringing the bell until the rope was worn out. To this custom, the faculty decided to put a stop with our class. This was regarded as bringing on our class everlasting shame and disgrace, a thing that must not be allowed. On the night when this finishing work of the class was to be performed, the faculty, having taken the precaution to bar all the avenues to the chapel, arranged themselves in full force about the door, to prevent any possibility of breaking in. In this crisis of affairs, the class gathered about the lightning rod, while Joe scaled it, entered the belfry, and rang the bell in the face of the faculty, and so saved the honor of the class.

On the whole, however, during my stay in college, the discipline was wholesome, and no serious disturbances occurred. There was, as a matter of course, some hilarity, but very little of a scandalous nature.

While I did not lead my class, an ambition that never took possession of me, I succeeded in attaining a fairly honorable position, and did not fail to secure some of the minor honors. I was appointed prize speaker and was placed on the Junior Exhibition list—honors that proved my greatest misfortune.

## CHAPTER XI

### ABANDONMENT OF COLLEGE COURSE

NOT long before the time of the prize contest, during my Sophomore year, while on a visit to Uncle Asa Austin's at McGrawville, I had an attack of pleurisy, brought on by inordinate laughing. Instead of returning to college, as was my expectation, I was obliged to hasten home, where I was confined some months by this somewhat serious attack. When I had so far recovered as to be able to return to college, being still weak from the effects of the attack, I went to the woods to practice in preparation for the exhibition. This was too much for me in my enfeebled condition, and it brought on a mild form of bronchitis. However, I went through with the contest, so frightened by the vast audience before me that I could not tell when I left the stage whether I had said my piece or not. I disappointed both myself and my friends in that I failed to receive a prize. This failure of my voice was doomed to disappoint and discourage me in a way more serious than the loss of the prize. It eventuated in changing the plans I had laid out for myself. Although I went on with my work in college, I did not fully recover from my sickness and difficulty with my throat.

It was at this time that I became acquainted with Dr. Noyes, ex-professor of Chemistry. He had a fine garden

and a small farm, and was much interested in horticulture. He had also a small private laboratory in which he spent much of his time. These interested me, and particularly the horticultural pursuits. Accordingly, I went to board with him 'for a short time. He gave me a plot of ground on which to plant various seeds and fruits, and I practically started a little nursery. This gave me out-of-door occupation at my leisure hours, in the hope that it might prove beneficial to my health. It was doubtless helpful in keeping me up, but my health was far from being permanently established.

As the end of my Junior year approached, and before the time of the Junior contest, to which I had the honor of an appointment, I decided, at the advice of my dear friend and teacher, Dr. Edward North, to accept the invitation extended me through the intercession of Dr. North, to spend the summer of 1847 with the Downings, the far-famed horticulturists of Newburgh, N. Y. Dr. North was himself highly interested in horticulture, and had an acquaintance with the Downings. I had previously read their "Landscape Gardening," which had set me on fire with its artistic and poetic inspiration. I also knew something of their "Fruit and Fruit Trees of America." I was glad of this opportunity to gratify my taste in this direction, hoping that at the same time my health might be permanently benefited by it. The opportunity for getting a practical knowledge of horticulture and of forming acquaintance with these men proved a very happy one. I became familiar with all lines of the nursery business by going out and working with the man.

Mr. Charles Downing took me in as a member of his family, and treated me with the greatest kindness and con-



sideration. We became, in fact, intimate, lifelong friends. I always remember him with the greatest respect and deepest affection. A. J. Downing was the writer, while Charles was the practical man. "The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America" was the product of the practical knowledge of A. J., and after the sad death of his brother, he made all the revisions of the book. Charles was a very plain man, but full of good heart and good sense. With Mr. and Mrs. Downing I stayed on through the entire summer. I could not have had a more delightful home. The house was large and roomy, and located on the banks of the Hudson, in full sight of the Highlands.

Early in the fall, Mr. J. W. P. Allen, a nurseryman from Oswego, came to Newburgh to purchase nursery stock, and he besought me to go to Oswego and take an interest with him in the nursery business which he had already established. To this proposition I felt inclined to give some attention, and my friend, Mr. Downing, seemed to encourage me in it. The business was in the line of my tastes, my throat difficulty was still upon me and seemed effectually to discourage me from the execution of the plans with which I set out on entering college. The outdoor life and pleasant occupation that this business offered seemed favorable to the recovery of my health. Mr. Allen went to Perry to consult with my father and mother, and the decision was made to enter into partnership with Mr. Allen in his business, my father lending me five hundred dollars towards the venture. Abandoning my college and law-school plans, I went to Oswego in the fall of 1847 to enter upon my new enterprise.

*Edward A. Sheldon, to a Friend.*

Perry Centre, Aug. 11, 1847.

. . . . .  
. . . . . It is my nature to "hurry." I regret that it is so, but what is, can't be helped. I have always been told that I would "hurry myself through life and into the grave"; and when I stop to reflect, I tremble at the danger. I don't know when I . . . have seen the moment I was not in a hurry; or felt a restless desire to be doing, or do faster. I think, however, I shall be able to overcome this in some measure. . . . I have written to Allen, giving him *some* encouragement, but not a decided answer. Our folks all seem to favor my going, though, as they say, they don't know much about it. . . . I think I have weighed the matter well; as well as I could had I *years* to decide in; and I have about come to the conclusion that, taking *all things* into consideration, I had better accept. My greatest query has been whether I should sacrifice my education for *money*; and it is now with a great deal of reluctance that I can consent to give it up; but if I go on, I 'fear I shall be able to do but little better than I have done for two or three terms past.

I am convinced that close application to study is very injurious to me, and the physicians and my friends tell me I must not persist in it. I have thought, too, that I might devote as much time to study as will be good for me, and at the same time do the business of the nursery; and I think perhaps I shall be able to make arrangement with George to take my place during the winter months, so that I can be with my class.

I have written to Prof. North, making a full statement of the case and asking his advice altogether with some questions upon points of law and partnership. In a previous letter to me, speaking of Oswego, Mr. Allen's nursery, etc., he says, "A connection with him (Mr. A.) would be very desirable. The location is undoubtedly one of the best

in the State." Cowles, an old graduate near there, has written to me to the same effect. This was the fore part of the season, when I first thought of making some arrangement with Mr. Allen. Pro'fessor then wrote to Allen, and I expect said something for me, but what I know not; but one thing is certain; he has a great idea of a certain youngster of *our acquaintance*; I fear far greater than he will realize.

Since I wrote you last I have received a letter from Mr. Fanning, President of Nashville College, Tenn., in answer to a letter I wrote him a short time since making some inquiries about the course of study, system of education, country, etc. He is desirous I should join them, and render him some assistance in their Horticultural department. They have connected with the college, a farm, garden, and nursery, workshops, etc., and each student devotes three or four hours a day to some employment, to the avails of which they are entitled. They devote a good deal of attention to Chemistry, Mineralogy, Geology, and Botany. All this *appears* very well, but there is room enough for improvement in our Northern system of education; and I long to see it brought about. . . .

## CHAPTER XII

### BEGINNING LIFE IN OSWEGO: 1847: A BUSINESS VENTURE

ON REACHING Oswego, I became a boarder in Mr. Allen's family, who then resided in the stone house on the corner of East Seventh and Mohawk Streets. We erected the first public greenhouse in Oswego on the corner of East Tenth and Utica Streets, where the nursery was located.

In this family I had a fairly comfortable home, although Mr. Allen was not a good provider. He was emphatically a visionary man. He did not live in an everyday, practical world. He did not see things as ordinary men saw them. This characteristic manifested itself in all his business relations.

During my first winter in Oswego, I made a few acquaintances. Mrs. Allen had a niece living with her, a Miss Treadway, the daughter of an Episcopal clergyman, a bright, lively young woman. She had a match in her friend, Miss Elizabeth Ludlow, a daughter of Judge Ludlow. They were full of fun and frolic, and indulged this propensity very freely. My acquaintance with the Ludlow family became quite intimate, and a good deal of freedom of intercourse existed between us, as the following incident will illustrate:

One winter evening, Miss Treadway and Elizabeth Ludlow took it into their heads to play a trick on me. I doubt-

less gave them the impression of being a green country boy, not accustomed to city ways, who might be easily frightened. They dressed themselves up in very grotesque garbs, with masks on their faces, and thus attired, called me. They found me very cool, collected, and not at all disturbed, and I entered freely into conversation with them. Finding that I was not in the least disconcerted, they soon retired, and I proposed to Mrs. Allen that I would at once return the call, if she would loan me an old suit of clothes, an old hat, some flour, and a jug. She entered into my plans heartily, and I was soon on my way to the Ludlows in the garb of an old, drunken miller. I entered the side gate, ascended the back steps, uttering sounds appropriate to the character I had assumed. As good luck would have it, the old folks were all away from home, and the occupants at that time consisted of Judge Ludlow's children, Anna, Helen, Baldwin, and Elizabeth, and Miss Treadway. They were all young people, none of them children, and not likely to be harmed by a little fright. Elizabeth was doubtless the youngest of the company, and she was a young lady. Taking me for a drunken tramp, as I had trusted they might, the entire crowd fled precipitately upstairs, leaving me in full possession of the parlors. Soon after, the windows upstairs flew open, and there was a wild cry for help. Baldwin, the only boy in the company, proposed to announce that they had a gun, and would shoot. But Anna, the oldest, with her characteristic conscientiousness, suggested that he should not say that he had a gun, as this would be telling a lie, but that he should talk about a gun.

Having accomplished my object, I thought it best to retire before succor came. Returning to my boarding place,

I doffed the old suit, and putting on my usual attire, I went over to the Ludlows, to see how matters were ending. Some passing friend had come in at their call for help, and finding no tramp, pacified their fears and got them all back to the parlors, where I found them still in a very agitated state of mind, discussing the intrusion of the tramp and their fortunate rescue from harm. They narrated to me the whole transaction with the greatest interest, and when they were all through, and I realized that I had gotten out of it all that I cared for, I gave them the true interpretation of the affair. The girl team took it as a good joke, and rather enjoyed the way they had been paid off for their call on me, but Anna was inclined to take it more seriously, and I thought she never quite forgave me for the fake. She had a horror of deception of any kind, and I have thought that she never quite trusted me after that as she did before. For me this was about the only fun of the season. My time was spent quietly at home and in attention to such business as my new occupation demanded.

In the spring, some change of household plans made it necessary for me to find a new boarding-place, and I went to the Oswego Hotel to board and to room with my new friend, Cheney Ames. He had recently lost his wife, and he took me to his own room; and we became warm, lifelong friends. He rose to a position of wealth and influence, and proved himself of essential service to me in my future work.

It very soon became evident to me that I had embarked in a sinking ship, that the firm was practically insolvent, and that the best thing for me was to get out of it as soon as practicable. The little money I had invested was quickly absorbed, and I could not hope to get it back again. Mr.

Allen, however, offered to give me a small block of city lots located in this part of the town, in lieu of my interest in the company. I decided to accept this as being the best thing I could do in the present exigency. It was a fortunate escape at any price, and I came out in the end without much if any loss, for I soon sold my lots, and thus by slow installments got my money back.

I was once more free, and without any plans for life. I had no liking for idleness, and began to look around eagerly for some occupation. I sought for this in several different directions.

*Extracts from Diary of E. A. Sheldon,*

East Oswego, 1847.

Sept. 8th.—This day is an important period of my life. It is, as it were, the first starting-point of my life; at least, the birthday of my manhood. I have heretofore never known what it was to look after or provide for myself, and hence, I have been, as it were, care-free. To-day I have commenced business for myself. This day I assume the name of a partner in a firm, and its consequent cares and responsibilities. I am frank to confess that my ambition now is to gain an honorable reputation. I am resolved that in six years from this time, if my life and health are spared, no nursery in the State of New York shall surpass this of ours. . . .

Sept. 9th.—1st, Went to the greenhouse and worked at making out a list of ornamental trees, shrubs, and plants until noon. After dinner, went and saw Mr. McCarter, a mason, about completing the mason work of the greenhouse. 2nd, Worked at the catalogue. 3rd, Went over the river to see about purchasing a horse. After supper went again to see McCarter and Kline. Thus ends the second day of my new life. There is so much to be done, it really

makes me feel wild. But Industry and Perseverance, they say, do wonders.

Sept. 10th.—Went two or three miles to see a horse; returned and wrote a preface for a catalogue. After dinner went down to the greenhouse and laid out a plan for an office. Gave a note of \$30.00 for a horse; harnessed him and went with Kline to cut some buds; and then went to town and bought a harness. After supper went to see about purchasing a wagon and hiring masons.

Sept. 11th.—Went to the greenhouse and back and prepared an advertisement for the "Horticulturist and Cultivator." Went with a man from Jefferson Co. and showed him over the nursery. After dinner went with Allen about five miles out of town to a Mr. Worden's, a cultivator of fruit. Such a load of fruit I never saw. One little Bartlett three inches and a half in diameter bore three bushels of the finest pears. Many of his apples too are very fine. I begin to think more of Oswego than ever. If as a general thing the fruit trees of Oswego can be made to bear such abundance of fine fruit as those of Worden, every rood of land ought to be covered with them.

Sept. 13th.—In the forenoon budded apricots on peach. This afternoon wrote an advertisement and two or three letters; helped Allen pack fruit for taking to the fair; and lastly chased the packet\* some four miles. I do firmly believe that man was born an hour too late, for he seems always trying to catch up, but has never succeeded as yet.

Sept. 14th.—Went to market for Mrs. Allen, then to greenhouse, repaired stoneboat, went over the nursery in search of the best opportunity of getting stone. Came back and went down town to the harness shop; and returned to Allen's and chopped wood till noon. After dinner went down to greenhouse, and with Kline made out a list of fruits for catalogue. Returned and chopped wood till supper. This evening chatted and played backgammon.

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\*The fast canal-boat.—ED.



Sept. 16th.—Before breakfast went to market and sawed some wood for Mrs. Allen. After breakfast went to the nursery and set the hands at work; and after that budded trees all day.

Sept. 21st.— . . . Met at the table with some youngsters, collegians. Spent the evening with them. They entertained me by playing whist while I sat moping in the corner. They expressed much surprise that I was a student and could not play whist.

Nov. 12th.—This forenoon stole somewhat of the Paddy's trade by way of ditching. . . . This evening went to consult with a lawyer about the nature of my security against Allen. . . . He thinks as I do, that things look rather dark. . . . Whether wilfully or not, I cannot tell, but the man has certainly deceived me in regard to the real value of the nursery stock and the income of the establishment. On the strength of what he said, I have involved myself in debt, from which I fear I shall not be able to extricate myself. All things combine to give me the blues.

Dec. 3rd.— . . . A long interval has elapsed since I last opened my day-book. (Entries had been continued pretty regularly until Nov. 19th.—Ed.) Most of this time I have been absent on business at my father's. . . . A large portion of the time when here, I have the "blues" roundly. I find a heavy debt accumulated on my shoulders. "What shall I do?" is a question I cannot solve. . . . I see my folly in attempting to do so heavy a business without some capital to start upon. . . . I begin to think I must work or starve.

Dec. 4th.— . . . I have the "blues" so that I can accomplish but little or nothing. I am almost constantly brooding, over my condition, which unfits me for every duty. I must make an effort to shake it off, and content myself with doing the best circumstances will allow: angels could do no more. . . .

*Letter to His Sister.*

New York, Apr. 18, 1848.

Dearest Sister,—

It is late at night, and the watchmen's clubs are sounding on the flagged pavements over which I have been treading all day, yes 'for the whole week past, until foot-sore and disheartened, I turn in to breathe out my heart feelings into the ear of those whom I know are ever ready to sympathize. I have just closed a letter to Frances, and my own loved sister and family must come next. . . .

But you are anxious to know what brought me here, and what I am doing. I believe you have my history to Clinton. Since then it is short, but big with events. While at Clinton I received a letter from Prince, an extensive nurseryman at Flushing, L. I., eight or nine miles from the city, promising, or at least giving me the strongest kind of encouragement, that he would give me a situation as clerk in his nursery. I accordingly came, putting implicit confidence in what he told me. . . . I reached Flushing a week ago last Friday. Prince was away from home, nor did he return until Saturday afternoon, when he gave me to understand that he had nothing for me to do. . . .

Oh! how can I describe, or how can you understand my feelings at this time! Nothing but despondency and black despair seemed to hang over me. On Sabbath morning I lay tossing to and fro with fevered head and brain, with not a single ray of light or hope to cheer the present or the future. . . . Oh! wretched man that I was! and I cried "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" Then a thought flashed across my mind, that I was, and had been leaning too much upon an arm of flesh. I arose, fell upon my knees, determined to leave my case with God. I wrestled long and hard; and blessed be God, he enabled me to prevail.

I was now as happy as I was before wretched. I look upon that day as one of the most propitious periods of my life. My joy indeed unspeakable. It was like another regeneration. I believe, indeed, I was then enabled for

the first time *fully* to conquer my wicked, headstrong ambition, and *completely* to overcome my attachment to the things of time and sense; and make my duty to God second to nothing. I knew now no better than before how I was going to extricate myself from my present embarrassed situation; but I put my trust in God, and I was happy. I knew he would provide a way for me.

The particulars of how I got away, etc., I will tell you when I have more time. Suffice it to say I got back to New York. And here for a full week I have been chasing over these *hard* pavements in search of employment, until foot-sore and weary I am almost discouraged.

. . . If I do not find a situation, I don't know but I had better find my way home if my labor can be turned to a good account there. How would it be? Could enough more work be laid out, by way of planting corn, or sowing grain so as to make it an object or worth while for me to join hands with you this summer? . . . I have ordered my lots at Oswego to be sold and have left the business with Mr. Talcott. I presume I can stay with Mr. Downing this summer, and unless my aid can be turned to a good account at home, perhaps I had better do so.

I tell you what it is, sister dear, I have learned some invaluable lessons, though at rather a dear price. I know you have been very anxious to hear from me, but I have been in so unsettled a state, that I feared it would give you but little satisfaction; and I hoped each morning that the night might give things a more decided character; but each night has left me where the morning found me, and I felt that I must delay no longer. A few days ago I sat down and filled half a sheet for you, but everything was so indefinite I committed it to the flames. Remember me in most tender affection to the family and take a great deal of love to yourself from

Your constant and devoted brother,

EDWARD.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE RAGGED SCHOOL: 1848-1849

DURING this period of suspense, it came into my mind to investigate the condition of the poorer classes in the city of Oswego. I accordingly invested five cents in a small blank book that I could carry in my pocket, decided upon the statistics I could gather, and began my rounds among the poorer tenements in the outskirts of the city. Among the items that interested me particularly was the educational status of the poor. Greatly to my surprise, I found fifteen hundred persons who could neither read nor write. As a country boy I had hardly known of such a person, and my astonishment may be well understood on finding such a degree of gross ignorance. To me it seemed like being in the midst of heathendom.

Being deeply impressed by this state of things, I communicated the facts I had ascertained to my friend, Mr. Ames and to another good friend, Douglass Smith, a fellow-boarder, and suggested that something be done for the education and care of these poor classes. They were in full sympathy with me, and we resolved at once to communicate the information I had gained to others and enlist their co-operation. This resulted in the call for a meeting of a few prominent, benevolent, active citizens to consider plans of operation. The first meeting was held Tuesday, Octo-

ber 31, 1848. The result was the organization, on November 28, of the "Orphan and Free School Association."

*Extracts from a Letter to His Sister.*

Oswego, Nov. 23, 1848.

A few Sabbaths after I came here, I visited a mission Sabbath school recently started here. I was surprised to find a large number of them, children eight and ten years old, who could not read their *A, B, C!* As I passed through the streets that day and saw great numbers of ragged, profane children romping the streets, having no idea of the sacredness of the day, my heart was pained within me, and I went to my room reflecting what might be done for these poor children. I told my chum, if I had the means, I should not hesitate what to do. I would open a school into which I would gather these children and teach them free. He said he thought the means might be raised. We then formed a resolution to make an effort; laid a little plan; made some estimates, got upon our knees and implored the blessing of God to give it success.

We first introduced the subject in a public manner at a prayer meeting; there appointed committees to make further investigation. Since then we have had two or three meetings of the citizens generally. Christians are praying for it in private and public; our ministers are all urging it from the pulpit; several discourses have been based entirely on this subject. For the week past we have been circulating subscription lists; have got six hundred dollars subscribed, and shall probably get three hundred or four hundred more. Next Tuesday night we meet to organize. We hope to be able to accommodate one hundred or one hundred and fifty scholars.

Clothing will have to be furnished these children more or less, as well as books. An effort will be made to get as many as possible into good families. They are to be taught moral as well as mental precepts. Benevolence must search

them out, visit the families from time to time, extend to them the hand of sympathy and affection, and teach them that they may become worthy citizens as well as others. There are hundreds of children in this city as ignorant and depraved as the children of India or China. Two or three missionaries might be constantly employed with profit here.

I have really been led into this unpremeditatedly and unintentionally. I felt that something ought to be done here; and I knew it would not be done until some one should offer himself a sacrifice to the work and lead it on. Thus far I have succeeded better than I anticipated. Next Tuesday night we meet to organize. Something may come up to frustrate the whole plan, but at present it *promises* very well. The greatest difficulty I find is to get gentlemen or ladies to help me do the labor. That is all new business to them; they want a good deal of training; and they will get it if I have to do with them long. It is no dishonor to beg in a good cause.

When this plan first suggested itself to me, I thought it was a new thing under the sun; but I have since learned that nearly the same thing was introduced into London a few years since; and that now some of their schools number over a thousand; and it has gained popularity all over the continent; so that government has recently made an appropriation to them. Boston has also adopted something the same plan. They find it to be the only way to reach this class. At the same time these children are sought out for school, all orphan children of a tender age are to be picked up and provided for, thus paving the way as we trust for an Orphan Asylum.

I sometimes tremble at the responsibility I am taking upon myself, for it is all new, *entirely* new business for me. I put my trust in God, who alone can give me wisdom to direct and strength to perform. It has opened a pretty effectual way for me to become acquainted with the people of Oswego, for old and young, high and low, rich and poor,

have pretty well learned by this time who is the poor boy's friend. I wish I could take you with me a little while in my visitations among the poor, I could show you what you have only dreamed of before.

The first article of the constitution indicates the objects of the association.—Article I. "The object of this association shall be the intellectual and moral education and improvement of such poor and orphan children in this city as are not otherwise provided for in these respects."

The movement enlisted the interest of all the churches, the clergymen, and the leading philanthropic gentlemen of the city, who gave the movement their hearty support. Funds were collected, sewing societies organized for the preparation of clothing, second-hand garments of all kinds were solicited, rooms were rented for the school, schoolbooks purchased, and all necessary provisions made.

The next thing in order was the employment of a teacher. I urged upon the committee the importance of taking this step at once. "Why," said Mrs. Fisher, one of the most influential, active persons on the committee, "I thought you were to be the teacher." "Oh, no," I said, "I cannot teach the school; I never had any such idea. I never taught school in my life and do not know how to teach and, more than all, I have already made other arrangements."

During the time that these movements were going on, I had arranged with the President of Auburn Theological Seminary to enter that institution as a student. My outdoor life and activities, together with such medical aid as I had been able to secure, had so restored my health that I felt justified in taking this step.

Mrs. Fisher replied, "If you are not going to teach this school, I will have nothing more to do with it." "Very well," I replied, "in that case I must teach the school."

Judge Churchill, the secretary of the association, said, "What salary shall we pay you?" I answered after a moment's reflection, "It will cost me about \$275.00 to live



and that is all I ask." Judge Churchill answered, "We will make it an even amount and call it \$300.00."

Thus it was settled that I was to take charge of the new "ragged school," as it was dubbed. Nothing could ever have been farther from my thoughts than the idea of teaching school; nothing for which I considered myself so poorly adapted. But the duty seemed to lie before me, and however much I might shrink from it, there seemed to me no alternative. The enterprise must not fall through at this stage for want of a teacher, and as that duty now seemed to fall to my lot if we had a school at all, I would do the best I could. This seemed to me the strangest of all the fortunes of mine. This was not a plan of my own making, but something given me to do. I resolved to make the best of it and go ahead.

*Extracts from a Letter to His Sister.*

We shall probably have some thirty or 'forty orphans to take care of and I think we shall open an Orphan Asylum at once, though on a small, economical scale at first, of course. . . .

This is the hardest community to work upon I ever saw or heard of. I have had to tug and toil through thick and thin, and almost drive them on to the work in order to get anything done; and yet everyone seems to be surprised at the success which has attended that effort. If this does ultimately succeed, it is the first benevolent effort of *any kind*, I understand, that ever has succeeded here. The great game here is to make money. . . .

Thus I found myself in the autumn of 1848 with one hundred twenty to one hundred thirty wild Irish and French boys and girls, in the basement of what was called the "Tabernacle," a building that stood on West Second Street, near Bridge Street, on the site of the present engine house,



Many of these children had never been inside a schoolroom, and knew no better how to behave as pupils than I did as teacher. This was a strange school, with a no less strange teacher. None such had ever been assembled in Oswego.

It was a curiosity, and as such was visited by teachers and others. Mr. I. B. Poucher, a graduate of the Normal School at Albany, who at the time had charge of a public school in the old Academy building, located on the site of the present High School, and who later became associated with me in my educational work, and so continues up to this date (December, 1896), relates some amusing stories of my methods as he saw them. One thing is surely true: if any principles of pedagogy were applied in this school, they were either intuitive or accidental. I had never read any theories of school teaching, and certainly had none of my own at the outset; at least, all my work was haphazard. About all I knew was that these children were poor, neglected, and ignorant, and needed sympathy and help; and these I certainly could give them. Of this I am also sure, I got their confidence and love. It was a usual sight on my way to school to have a large number of these poor children hanging on to the ends of my fingers and coat-tails, greatly to the amusement of the lookers-on.

The order of the school was doubtless not up to the professional standard. It was not unusual to see two boys stand up for a fight in the presence of the school. But allowances are to be made for the character of the pupils, the inexperience of the teacher, and the larger number children in attendance. There were children enough present to require the services of three or four teachers.

I spent Saturdays in visiting parents at their homes, look-

ing after their necessities, and supplying them as far as possible. These Saturday visits were often the most tiresome work of the week. I used to return home from them completely exhausted, such was the draft upon my sympathies in view of the squalid poverty and wretchedness I found in the homes of the helpless poor. Some things I could do for them, but there was much that I could not do. Some temporary relief could be given, but to lift them out of the low lives to which they had fallen seemed hopeless. The hardest experience that ever comes to us is to see wretchedness that cannot be alleviated.

The school and its attendant work went on prosperously. The Sunday School, the outside charitable work, the visitation from house to house, went on hand in hand with the day-school. Meanwhile, the winter of 1848-9 came and went.

*Extracts from the Diary of E. A. S.*

Oswego, Jan., 1849.

Jan. 30.—Opened the Orphan and Free School the 14th day of January, 1849, with 70 scholars. Have now on my list over 140. Had in regular daily attendance 120. Have this week in regular attendance but 90, and five or six of those are new ones.

Jan. 31.—Had ninety scholars. Two have returned, who had left. One little girl froze her cheeks. Two of the boys came today two miles, come to get warm; they cried piti-ously with the cold. They have for pants but poor, ragged, and very light and thin cloth. For a coat one has but tick-ing; and neither of them have vests. . . . Have not had to punish a child today. They begin to show signs of improvement.

Feb. 1.—A windy uncomfortable morning. But few chil-

dren out to school. Dr. Baird called on me this morning, together with Dr. Condit. . . . Tonight in his lecture on England, while speaking of the "Ragged Schools" of London, referred to this school in the highest terms. . . . Found tonight by the wayside, a very ragged-looking boy ; stopped and called him to me ; inquired into his history, and he took me to his home ; found in a small room of an old dilapidated building some seven or eight grown persons huddled around a stove, two beds, or rather frames on which the merest apology for straw beds were thrown ; the room was literally stowed full. . . . The father had just come over, expended all he had in coming over, and had not been able to find work since he arrived in America. Was anxious to have his boy go to school ; would like to work to pay for some clothes.

Feb. 2.—Had between eighty and ninety scholars. They seem to grow more and more eager to learn. . . . Supplied a little boy by the name of Patrick Burke with shoes. Has been to school nearly a fortnight, next thing to barefoot ; his clothes are also very poor. His mother has run away. His father is a poor miserable drunken stick, without money or a home. They go from one poor shanty to another, living on the charities of these poor people. He is a smart active boy, and needs a home very much. I hope to be able to procure one for him. . . .

Feb. 3.— . . . Joseph Perkins left school for want of pants and coat. He has two sisters . . . want dresses, petticoats, shawls, and shoes. . . . Called at Mr. Blayes where I found three girls . . . who had left school for want of shoes. The girls are very interesting children. The mother said the children were so eager to attend school, that she made for them some cloth shoes which they wore to school until they were entirely worn out and they 'froze their feet ; and then they were obliged to stay at home ; and then the children cried to go even barefooted.

Feb. 7.—Today have commenced a little on the Lancas-

trian plan; made my scholars assistants. I put them the question whether they would become my assistants or whether I should hire an assistant; they decided to assist me. I proposed to them to have several grades of scholarship, and the one who should make the best recitations should hear the most advanced class; and the next the second, etc., etc., I have my fears about the working of the thing; but it is impossible for me to do all the work. Tonight I was so tired I could hardly stand up or speak a loud word. . . .

Feb. 8.—Had ninety scholars; seemed more unmanageable than ever; find it is wearing upon my health. . . .

Feb. 9.—A very tedious stormy day; had notwithstanding seventy or eighty scholars; presume they 'found it more comfortable than at home. Two market baskets full of fragments left of a donation visit were sent in, which I distributed among the children; they seemed elated with it.

Feb. 10.— . . . Called on a poor widow by the name of McGuire. Here I found poverty in its most lank forms. The widow was but poorly clad hovering over a cold stove, industriously plying her needle. There were other families in the same tenement, but how many I know not. Their shanty was but little protection to them from the inclement season. There was not fire enough to make the least impression on the snow which had drifted in the night before; some of which they had used to bank up around the inside of the room. This widow has a boy and girl who have been at my school; bright intelligent children. The boy had on one boot and one shoe; but the shoe was but little better than none at all. The girl came to my school a day or two, until she took cold for want of protection from the cold and was obliged to stop. She had now nearly recovered, and was about the room with nothing in the world on her feet and hardly enough clothing to cover her nakedness. The boy has been for a day or two to the Catholic school. I asked her whether they would not clothe her children at the Catholic school; and if so, I advised her to

send them to it. She said she would, and if they did not clothe them, she should send them to my school. . . .

Afternoon.—Saw a little boy running along the street without coat and barefoot with a jug under his arm. I immediately followed him; he entered a grog-shop into which I followed him. The keeper filled his jug with whiskey; remarking at the same time something about the little fellow's being barefooted. I uttered an expression of surprise as though I had not seen the boy before. The grog-keeper all at once expressed a great deal of sympathy for the boy, and says, "How great a charity it would be for some one to put some clothes on his back and shoes on his feet!" I thought, "How much better it would be for you not to sell this boy liquor, and thus save the money for him to buy shoes!" . . .

Feb. 23.—A very beautiful day. Had a large school. . . . The school has been unusually noisy today, seemed hard to keep them still. Tonight called at Mr. Hensey's; seemed very much elated to see me. The little children saw me coming, and cried, "There comes the school master!" Mrs. H. came out to meet me and heartily seized and shook my hand. They urged me hard to take some tea and Johnny-cake; but I begged as hard to be excused. They are very poor and destitute. The father is partially deranged and the mother has the whole family of five or six to provide for. She is a very kind-hearted woman. . . .

Feb. 28.—One hundred scholars. Am completely exhausted. . . .

Mar. 19.—School continues small during these pleasant days. Find it much more difficult to keep them still in such weather than when less inviting. . . .

Mar. 20.—This morning had some trouble in school. A great lawless boy, nearly as large as myself, who has always caused me a great deal of trouble, after disobeying me and laughing me in the face, I struck him over the head with the rattan. Upon this he rose and showed fight; I plied the rod

the closer, and soon subdued him, and he cried like a baby. At noon, however, in the street, he was very saucy. Tonight went and saw his mother; found her a widow with a large family; and a poor man with his boy living upon her—for which she received no compensation. Went to see the poor-master to see if something could not be done to pay her for keeping the poor man, but without success. For the boy I hope to be able to get a place. The poor widow, to show her gratitude to me for the interest I took in her, fitted me out with an umbrella, and asked me to take some punch or wine; upon which I gave her a short temperance lecture.

Mar. 27.—Had no help today. Found a good deal to try my patience in school. Did not get through until six o'clock. Has been a cold raw day.

March 28.—Had a very pleasant school. This afternoon some general exercises and the girls sewed. Mrs. and Miss Fisher were in to assist in sewing. One unpleasant transaction was the only thing to mar the day. A surly boy had to be severely whipped; never whipped so hard in my life. I finally succeeded in subduing him.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MARRIAGE: 1849

IN THE spring of 1849, on the 16th of May, occurred the most important event of my life—that which had more to do with my success, my usefulness and happiness, than all other events combined. It was on this day that I added to my life that of Frances A. B. Stiles. Those who knew my circumstances, and who estimated my action from a material standpoint, doubtless considered that I was tempting Providence, and condemned it as foolish and unwise. It was, however, the wisest and most provident act of my whole life. This partner of my life did more to mold my character and make me what I have been and am, than all the other circumstances of my life. She proved to be a helpmeet in the highest and best sense of that term, as well as in its common meaning. She brought into my life that which I so much needed—the warm sympathy of a loving heart. She made for me all work light, every hardship a joy. It was for her I lived, moved, and had my being. The moral support she gave me, the intellectual stimulus, the help in all the everyday details of life, no one can ever know.

I was indeed poor ; I had an income of only three hundred dollars a year, was already in debt for seven hundred dollars, for which my personal notes had been given, and it was natural that some should consider me strangely inconsider-

ate. But they did not know of the boundless wealth she would bring into my life, without making me any the poorer in the things of this world. I have done many things in my lifetime that I have had occasion to regret, but this act I have always looked upon as one of the wisest and best. She did not bring to me earthly treasures, but that which was far better, a spiritual wealth that had no bounds.

This was no sudden, rash, or childish act. We had known each other for many years. I formed her acquaintance in the days of my college life. She was for a time a teacher in Perry Center Academy, my Alma Mater, and through my sisters and others I had heard much of her admirable traits of character. Mrs. Skinner of Perry Center and Mrs. Potwine of La Grange were her aunts. On one of my visits home from college, I formed her acquaintance at Mr. Potwine's. From the first I felt irresistibly drawn to her. I immediately courted her companionship. She did not reject my approaches. She consented to further acquaintance and correspondence.

An opportunity for better acquaintance occurred very soon. At the same time of my return to college, on recovering from my attack of pleurisy in the spring of 1846, Mrs. Stiles and her daughter returned to their home in Syracuse. Fortunately, we both embarked on the same boat from Cuylerville. Another fortunate circumstance was the fact that it was one of the slow line-boats that moved sluggishly along and stopped at every town. Thus a short journey was made long, and an excellent opportunity was afforded for a good social time. At Clyde, we stopped to see the glass works, and, at other places, other objects of interest. We reached Syracuse early one morning, and I accompanied



her to her home on East Genesee Street, where I frequently saw her on subsequent occasions, and where our final engagement was consummated.

It is a good instance of the dramatic juxtapositions of real life, that this, one of the chief joys, came to me at about the same time with one of the greatest disappointments in my experience—my failure in the prize speech at the College “Exhibition.” Both had a strong determining influence over my career, and both in the same direction.

Our courtship was not conducted without some drawbacks. Our case proved that the “course of true love never did run smooth.” It met with strong opposition on the part of Mrs. Stiles and her immediate friends, so that our opportunities for interview were few and brief. It was, in fact, mostly carried on by correspondence and in secret. My aunt lived at this time in Syracuse. This gave me a good excuse for spending my vacations here, and they were very generally improved. A little drawer in the hall in Mrs. Stiles’ house was the depository of our secret epistles. She taught me to superscribe these missives, “Meine Herzen-Geliebte,” a superscription that the mother was sure not to understand, should the letters be discovered. To this drawer I made daily pilgrimages to leave and receive our love missives. This opposition rather gave edge to our love and courtship, while it never caused her to swerve from her purpose. The day of our wedding was hastened by the change of my plans, and by the wise Providence that ordered my life better than I knew.

Our wedding was a very simple one. We were united in marriage by the Rev. Dr. Adams in a small room at the Globe Hotel, in the presence of a few intimate friends and

such relatives as resided in Syracuse. Our wedding trip was from Syracuse to Oswego. At this time I was boarding with the Rev. Mr. Judson, the pastor of what was then the Second Presbyterian Church, which subsequently organized into the present Congregational Church. His residence was in what was termed the "Stone Cottage." With its grounds, it occupied an entire block. The rooms were all large and airy, all on the first floor, and the outlook upon the town and the lake was not to be surpassed. The location was directly opposite and toward the lake from Mr. J. W. P. Allen's, my first Oswego home. It was bounded by Seventh and Eighth and Oneida and Mohawk Streets. The house was afterward destroyed by fire, and the block was sold out in city lots, and is now fully occupied by residences.

I can never forget the anticipations of this wedding day. All the preparations for it were accompanied by an ecstasy of joy. But the realization far exceeded all that I could anticipate. Our new home was a delightful one. We had as fellow boarders Mr. and Mrs. B. Randall, a newly married couple, former friends of mine, and among our fast friends in ensuing years. A new and most joyous life was now opened to me. Being in full sympathy with me in my work, Mrs. Sheldon aided me in many ways.

## CHAPTER XV

THE "OSWEGO SEMINARY": 1849-1851

*and a*

DIGRESSION TO SYRACUSE: 1851-1853

MY MISSIONARY work, for such it was, was not altogether confined to the ragged school. During the summer months I occupied my Sundays in distributing religious papers and tracts to sailors and boatmen. I also visited the jail for a similar purpose and for religious conversation and instruction.

Like many other philanthropic enterprises, an enthusiastic beginning finds, after a time, a waning. To this experience our enterprise was not an exception. The effort to raise money to meet the various expenses of the school and the necessities of the poor, began to abate, and the general interest to cease. As I saw these tendencies, I urged upon the members of our committee the importance of making all the public schools of the city free. This met with a hearty response. Persons outside of the Orphan and Free School Board were consulted, and such was the evident sentiment in favor of such a movement, that we decided to call a public meeting to discuss this question. I took it upon myself to circulate the call for such a meeting, and to explain to individual citizens upon whom I called, the advantages of a free school system. All this occupied much time, covering many months.

The public meeting was held in the old Supreme Court room, which then occupied the south end of what is now the City Hall, or D. L. & W. Hall, on the second floor. We had a good attendance of influential men of the city. A plan for the consolidation of the schools under a free school system was presented and discussed. For the most part the plan was well received. But one man, Thomas Bond, a politician, conceived some objections to the plan, and in a glowing speech appealed to the prejudices of the Catholics, by representing it as a Protestant movement to build up Protestant institutions, to be paid for by the Catholics. He was a very flowery, smooth-tongued speaker, and his speech accomplished his purpose. It aroused the united and strenuous opposition of the Catholics. Others fought it on the ground of expense.

In the city were twelve school districts. Each district had its officers. The people saw that the proposed plan would dissolve these districts, and so take away from them the direct control of their schools. This became another source of opposition. However, at this meeting a decision was reached to appoint a committee to draw up a definite plan, draft a school law, and submit the same to a public meeting to be called at some time in the future, when the committee might be able to report.

It has taken but a few words and a few moments to give a brief account of a movement that covered a year or two of time. Meanwhile, an opportunity came to me to take charge of a private school that was organized by a Miss Bloomfield, in what was the United States Hotel building, on the site of the present Normal School building. She was going to leave the school, and desired me to take it. The

prospect of making all the schools of the city free seemed a fair one, the interest in the ragged school had so far abated as to make it difficult to support it, and I decided to take the private school and enlarge its scope. It had been exclusively a girls' school. I resolved to add a boys' department, and wrote to Brother John to come and take this department. The arrangement was consummated, and the new school was opened. In this work, Mrs. Sheldon rendered valuable assistance, taking some of the classes. The school was fairly well patronized. We had a pleasant class of pupils, coming from the best families in Oswego.

This movement, with other circumstances, seemed to make a change of boarding-place desirable. Mrs. Sheldon had been employed to sing in the Episcopal Church, located at that time on the southeast corner of the West Park. We had also united with the First Presbyterian Church, on the West Side, Dr. Condit being the pastor.

The main part of the United States Hotel was at that time occupied as a boarding-house by a Mrs. Grant. The school occupied the west wing. We now took rooms in the west wing, and boarded with Mrs. Grant. It is said that this building was erected for a private residence, and that wings being added later, it was converted into a hotel. It was found to be too far removed from the center of business to succeed as a hotel, and so was occupied for schools, boarding-house, etc., as time went on. It was in this building that our first child was born.

With an increasing family came increasing expenses of living. Our school, like other institutions, proved itself liable to the law of periodicity. It began to diminish in numbers, and consequently in income. It was hardly sufficient

for the support of two families. At this time a vacancy occurred in the Superintendency of the public schools of Syracuse. The position was offered me, and I accepted. The salary was six hundred dollars, which was better than the income of the private school. The second year it was raised to seven hundred dollars, with fifty dollars traveling expenses additional, for visiting schools in other cities, with a view to improving those of Syracuse.

Meantime, in Oswego, the agitation in regard to free schools was not abandoned. The movement had taken a strong hold of the interest of our leading citizens, and the effort to secure free schools was bound to go on. The night I left Oswego to take up my new position in Syracuse, a large meeting of the citizens was held in the old City Hall (now D. L. & W. Hall). The president of the board of education of Utica had been invited to address the meeting. It broke up, however, in a kind of row, and this terminated all public meetings on this subject. The spirit aroused by the speech of Mr. Bond at that first meeting, in which he arrayed the Catholics against the Protestants, had gone on fomenting until the entire Catholic population was opposed to the measure, regarding it as a Protestant movement.

It was evident, as a result of this last public meeting, that if Oswego was to have a system of free schools, it must be secured in some other way than by popular gatherings. It must be accomplished in a more quiet way. This was in the spring of 1851. The following winter an effort was made to pass a bill through the legislature to organize a free school system in Oswego. For some reason it failed to become a law, but the following winter (1852-3), with Hon. D. C. Littlejohn in the Assembly and Hon. Robert C. Platt

in the Senate, both strong, able men, and friends of this new educational movement, the proposed bill became a law. It was, in truth, sprung on the people, as one might say, contrary to their will.

Under this act the first board of education was organized May 11, 1853, and quite unsolicited by me and greatly to my surprise, I was elected clerk or secretary as the office was termed, the salary to be eight hundred dollars, with prospect of an advance.

A new and important question was now before me for settlement: Would I remain and carry on the work already begun in Syracuse, or would I drop this, and return to Oswego to organize the work I had set in motion before leaving that city?

I had been in Syracuse two years, had succeeded in reconciling some antagonisms that had existed among the educational forces of that city, had accomplished something in the way of improving the classification and gradation of the schools, had put in operation a library system for the public and the schools, with a central library as a nucleus; I had published, in pamphlet form, the first annual report that had been issued, in which I set forth very fully the utility of a High School as a keystone to the existing system of public schools, by which means I had succeeded in awakening a deep interest in this subject. I had done much to improve the buildings and grounds, had put into operation a system of evening schools. I had evidently gained the confidence and co-operation of the teachers, the Board, and the people, and every prospect seemed flattering for the carrying out of the improvements already planned.

Syracuse was a more central, a more thriving, and a larger

city than Oswego, and in these ways seemed a more promising field of labor. In Syracuse I had formed some warm friendships both in the board and among the teachers. Such was more particularly the case with Mrs. Sheldon, who, though not born in Syracuse, was reared there 'from a child. We were then keeping house in her old homestead, and were fairly settled down in a pleasant home, with plenty of good friends about us. It was not, therefore, without many regrets that we thought of breaking away from these old associations and from the inviting prospects that lay before us there.

On the other hand, I had formed a strong affection for Oswego, and some of its citizens in particular, a number of whom were in the Board. In Oswego I would have the advantage of organizing a system from the start, in accordance with my own views. This would be better than to try to patch up and reorganize one already established. I would have the pleasure of carrying out and perfecting plans I had already laid out for Oswego. To my mind, the latter considerations outweighed the former, and I accordingly decided to return to my first love. I resigned my position in Syracuse, and entered at once upon what proved to be my life-work in Oswego.



## CHAPTER XVI

### "A TRAITOR TO HIS COUNTRY"

AT THE time of Mr. Sheldon's residence in Syracuse, anti-slavery agitation was passing through one of its hottest phases, owing to the passage, in 1850, of the Fugitive Slave Law, and the attempts of the Government to execute it. Syracuse was one of the main strongholds of abolitionism. It was one of the chief stations of the "underground railway," by which escaping slaves were spirited away to Canada. In Syracuse, the eminent Unitarian divine, Samuel J. May, was preaching abolition of slavery, and actively aiding in the escape of slaves, as notably in the "rescue of Jerry." Mrs. Sheldon's father, Ezra Stiles, had taken a leading part in these enterprises, but was not now living. Of course the daughter and her husband were keenly interested in the cause. Two of their letters, dated 1851, show where they stood, and restore those times vividly to mind.—  
ED.

*E. A. Sheldon to his brother George.*

.....  
..... Syracuse never saw such a time as last week afforded. And I could wish and pray that Sun, Moon, or Stars might never look upon another such scene. Our attention was first arrested by the tolling of four or five church bells. On inquiry we learned that one of our citizens, a colored man who had been residing here some two years, was arrested and claimed as a slave, by a man who boasted in open court that he was "of proud and *noble blood*"!!! A great crowd gathered around the court room. This was about two o'clock in the afternoon; he was arrested about twelve M. They now began to talk about adjourning to a larger room, when the prisoner, bound hand and foot in irons!!! (this is a *free country*

you know, though he was not yet proved *guilty* of having escaped from slavery), was seized and conveyed through the streets by the agitated crowd. They were followed by a body of police and other officers, and after a long and severe struggle he was retaken.

It was on this occasion that I witnessed what I never expected to behold. As the throng rushed by my office I went into the streets to see what was going on. Soon a well-dressed, fine-looking man came running through the streets at full speed, crying at the highest pitch of his voice: "Stop that slave-catcher! stop that slave-catcher!"—followed closely by an officer of *JUSTICE*—(Gracious Heaven! is this *American Justice*?)—who pounced upon his prey, as he fell over a pile of stones, like a ferocious beast of the forest. It proved to be a Mr. Gibbs, a highly respectable lawyer of Massachusetts, who was, or was *supposed* to be aiding the prisoner, for whom he was council. He was carried before Justice House, who released him *without bail*.

This was but one part of the tragedy. Soon came a scene that made my blood curdle in my veins; and made me ashamed of the land of my nativity; a country of which I have been taught to be proud. I saw this fugitive from, not *justice*, but *injustice*, dragged through the streets like a dog, every rag of clothes stripped from his back, hauled upon a cart like a dead carcase and driven away to a police office, for a mock trial.

The bells that had begun to peal their merry rounds in joy for his escape, now again resumed their mournful notes. The crowd that now gathered around the police office was immense. Two or three speakers harangued them from the steps of the office, while deeds of brutal, heathenish darkness were being enacted within.

It was a favorable time for this tragedy. A time, too, *no doubt*, that was agreed upon, and understood by Fillmore and his whole cabinet. For Webster, in his famous

speech here a short time since, said, in my hearing, and the hearing of thousands of our citizens, that we, that is, those who denounce and resist the Fugitive-Slave Law were "*traitors! traitors! traitors!*" That our action was nothing less than *high treason! treason! treason! treason!*" That in spite of us "*this Fugitive-Slave Law would be executed; and would be executed, too, at the next antislavery convention held in Syracuse*"; and if we were not careful "*a certain other law would be executed also*"; referring to the law for high-treason. Well the time of the *Prophet* had come and his words must needs be fulfilled. A slave hound had been waiting at one of our principal hotels for this convention to sit. On the same day the County Fair was in town; so that, we had here not only eminent strangers from abroad, but the best and most substantial citizens of the County. All were here to see the *practical working* of this *abominable law*.

The crowd increased as the trial went on, until about half-past eight o'clock the excitement became so warm that an occasional brick-bat was hurled through the windows of the office, and by the heads of the officers, reminding them that it might be safe to adjourn till morning. Not much after this action, everything having been well organized and arranged, the outsiders, with a twelve-foot plank for a battering-ram, and axes, crowbars and pistols, instantaneously broke through doors and windows, bars and bolts, exchanged two or three shots, broke one officer's arm twice (one who in his zeal had come down from Rochester to help defend and execute the laws of his country), who then broke a window out at full length and jumped at least sixteen feet on to the hard pavement, with a narrow escape of his life, and frightened the rest almost to death; who huddled into the corner of the room like so many sheep. The rescuers went through a second partition, took the prisoner and conveyed him away in triumph, while the welkin rang with the shouts of the delighted multitude.

This tragedy has put to flight a large number of our colored brethren—and among them one or two of our most talented and respectable citizens, one a clergyman. That southern gentleman of *noble blood!* has been arrested as a kidnapper, and has given bonds of one thousand dollars. It is rumored that fifty of our best and most respectable citizens will be arrested this week and tried for treason, the penalty of which is *death*. We expect that the worst part of the tragedy is yet to be enacted.

*Mrs. Sheldon to Sister Dorliska.*

. . . . We begin to find that we at the North have something to do with slavery, and this is shaking us some also. Considerable anxiety is felt here relative to the examinations going on to-day at Buffalo of our citizens who are charged with violating the laws of their land. Oh my country! where is thy shame? About three hundred witnesses have been summoned to appear. You can have no idea of the differences between *reading* of an arrest of a fugitive and actually witnessing it. Last week one day it was ascertained just before evening that kidnappers were in town and in quest of a female slave, a woman whom many of us knew as a really exemplary mother of a family of five children. Before twelve o'clock that night she and her children were placed beyond the reach of *Southern chivalry*, and every colored family in the city warned that hounds were in town. Notices that "kidnappers are in town" were found posted at every turn by the next morning. It was a matter of great mystery to us how the Vigilance Committee obtained news so soon, but we were soon satisfied that the southern men had some traitors among those who are so zealous in aiding them. Syracuse will escape the odium of allowing a fugitive to be taken from her midst. It never can be done. Is this not a treasonable letter?

## CHAPTER XVII

### ORGANIZATION OF FREE SCHOOLS IN OSWEGO: 1853

Up to this time the schools of Oswego had been under the old district school rate-bill system, the same as the country schools. Each district had its own local officers, elected annually by the people of the district. In this way each district was a separate establishment by itself. There were twelve such districts in the city. The new law contemplated the consolidation of all these districts into one with a single governing board.

I saw before me many inevitable breakers. The springing of this new order of things upon the citizens without their knowledge or consent was extremely distasteful to them. The officers of the various districts did not relish giving up their books and accounts and their authority, however brief. Mr. Fisher, an old friend, said to me as he met me on the walk the first day I returned to Oswego: "You have come to a hard place to build up schools. I have tried all my life to awaken some interest in school matters, but all to no purpose. It is of no use. You can do nothing." But this was the very thing I had come to do, and if I failed in this I had better not have come.

I asked the board for time until September to mature my plans and make all necessary arrangements for opening the schools under the new act. To this, ready assent was gained, and I began in earnest to study the existing

conditions and the best methods of bringing the schools under the new order with as little friction as possible. In several districts I found a single teacher instructing all grades. In a few others, the work of instruction was divided between two teachers. With a single exception no school had more than two teachers. In two schools algebra was taught, but with these exceptions no branches above the common English were taught. In a few cases the teaching was good, in others poor, very poor.

My plan was soon perfected. I decided to wipe out all present district boundaries and establish new ones on an entirely new plan, as follows: I arranged the city into twelve primary school districts, as nearly equal in number of children as I could estimate. These schools should embrace the first three years of the child's school life, from five to seven, or practically that. I then divided the city again into four Junior School districts, which were to include children in the fourth, fifth and sixth years of their school life, or from eight to ten years of age. I endeavored to distribute the children of these ages around four schools as nearly equally as possible. I then arranged for two Senior schools, one on each side of the river, providing a three years' course after the Junior schools, and including ages from eleven to thirteen.

Where buildings were located conveniently for the accommodation of one or more of these groups, they were accordingly utilized. In the outskirts or sparsely populated portions of the city, the small buildings, if conveniently located, were occupied by primary groups alone. If any building was suitably located for a primary and a Junior group to be together, it was so utilized. Some-

times the plan arranged for a Junior group in a separate building, sometimes for a Senior group in the same way. In but one instance were all the groups found in a single building.

The High school course was arranged for four years, embracing all the branches at present taught in the high schools of this State. This completed a continuous course of thirteen years. A definite course of study was marked out for each year, comprising an entire continuous course from the Primary school through the High school. The general plan is essentially the same as that now existing in the public schools of Oswego.

The most difficult task that lay before me was the weeding out of poor teachers and getting good ones in their places. I knew very well that, however good my plans might be, without good teachers I could accomplish nothing. My board appreciated this as well as I, and expressed a willingness to allow me to select my own teachers. I knew, however, that there were members of the board who had personal friends among the teachers. They regarded these friends as the best of teachers and would stoutly resist any proposition to drop them out. I therefore said to the board: "We ought to require an examination of these teachers before they receive their appointments." To this they readily assented. I further proposed the plan, that at the time of the examination, each candidate for examination should draw a number from a hat, by which he should be recognized. This number should be placed on a card with the name, put into an envelope and sealed. This number should be on all the papers containing answers. After the papers had all



been examined, all parties whose standing should be above a certain fixed percentage would be eligible to appointment, while none of the others would be. Not until the appointment by numbers had been reached should the envelopes containing the numbers and names be opened. This all agreed was perfectly fair and equitable, and a resolution was passed by the board adopting the plan.

When the examination came, I was sick and not able to be present, but when the announcement of the result was made in open board, there were many expressions of surprise and disappointment. Fortunately the board was composed of reasonable men. They had committed themselves to the plan and could hardly go back on the action they had taken. A little patching up of two or three cases had to be done to quiet the disturbed waters. The result was that a few of the best teachers were retained and the incapables were set adrift.

I took great care to select for each position the most capable teacher that the salary paid would command. I found already in the schools, two graduates of the Albany Normal School, Mr. I. B. Poucher and Miss L. E. Andrews. They were both superior teachers. So far as I could, I obtained other graduates from the same institution. Some of my best teachers I brought with me from Syracuse.

On the whole, my selections proved fortunate. I had a corps of good, tried teachers to start with. Of course the cry was raised against the importing of foreign teachers, rather than encouraging home talent. The same cry was raised against my own appointment. It is the same old story everywhere; I had heard it in Syracuse and have



heard it from that day to this. I sometimes think this kind of prejudice grows stronger as the years go on. I very much doubt whether a foreign teacher could be employed in the Oswego schools of to-day. But I had a board that always stood by me and allowed me to select my own teachers without interference; and I always selected the best I could find, regardless of locality, or minor, or personal considerations. If one thing more than another has contributed to my success, it has been my ability to select good teachers. Without them success is impossible. With them a superintendent may succeed against all odds.

My plans were now all laid, a course of study decided upon, and the teachers employed. The old-fashioned and rickety school furniture had been replaced by the newest and most approved to be obtained, the buildings were renovated and everything about them was made not only respectable, but inviting.

I had the entire plan, including the course of study, the boundaries of the different districts, the character of the grouping, all published in detail in the daily papers, explaining everything as clearly as possible. I called my teachers together and gave them careful instructions how to proceed. I charged them not to be too tenacious about qualification, saying, "So far as practicable, accept the children as they come, and leave the adjustment of minor matters to the future. Let us avoid friction as far as possible."

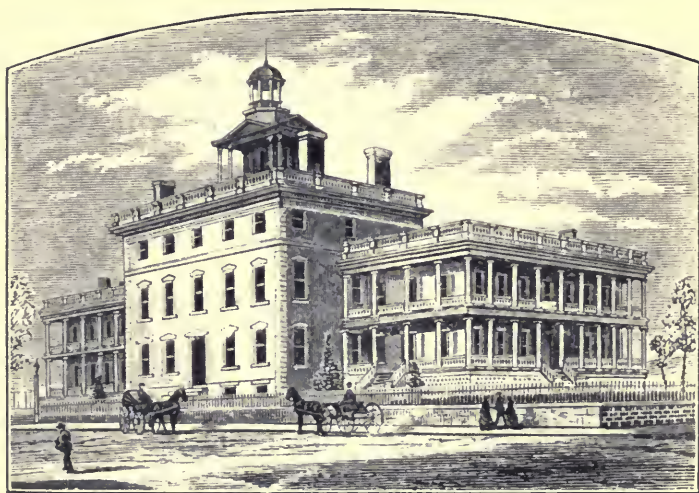
## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE WORK AND RESULTS OF THE FIRST YEAR

THE first day of school under the "new system" was the strangest one ever experienced by either parents or children connected with the public schools of Oswego. Families were separated, some members going one way to a Primary school, others a different way to a Junior school; and others still to a Senior or the High school. As might well be imagined, the confusion was complete. I went as rapidly as possible from one point to another, helping to bring order out of confusion. The day went quite as well as could have been expected. At least the beginning had been made.

The very complexity of the arrangement in one way seemed to have a good effect. The curiosity of the people was aroused to know what would come of it. It was something that attracted their attention and aroused their interest. The machine was now running in all its parts, and I venture the assertion that a more perfect piece of educational machinery was never constructed. All that was necessary now was to make some adjustments, remove some causes of friction, and provide the necessary adjuncts.

The several local district libraries were ordered sent to my office, then on Water Street, on the first floor of the City Hall building (now D. L. & W.), and out of



FIRST NORMAL SCHOOL BUILDING.  
[The Old United States Hotel.]



this miscellaneous mass one central library had to be organized. With such assistance as Mrs. Sheldon could give me, this work was done with my own hands, and to my duties as secretary of the board were added those of city librarian.

I opened a set of double entry books. I examined and certified to all bills, kept all the accounts of the board, and annually made a detailed report of all the doings of the board and the schools. This report was always published in pamphlet form, files of which have been kept and bound together for the city and Normal school libraries, and a few for private use.

These various duties kept me fully occupied. At this stage of progress in the organization of the schools, I felt it incumbent on me to be everywhere and to keep things moving as smoothly and harmoniously as possible. If I heard of any disaffected parties, I went to their homes and talked matters over, and rarely failed to bring about a reconciliation. If it became necessary to make any important change in the location of children at school, I would visit the parents and so pave the way for the change. By dint of the greatest care and diligence we succeeded in getting through the year without going to pieces, and came out with an improved organization and on a good footing, as the children were now in their proper places.

However, we did not have altogether smooth sailing. Much opposition manifested itself, and it was said that a petition signed by eight hundred citizens was sent to Albany asking for the repeal of the law; but this was the last serious effort made against the "new system." Yet at each annual election of new commissioners something

of discontent and the spirit of disorganization manifested itself. It was always at this season that I felt the deepest anxiety. Next in importance to good teachers were good commissioners. It was for this reason that I felt it incumbent upon me, as far as possible, to run these elections. I had the credit of doing it, and in an important sense it was true. Four new men were elected each year, or old ones returned. Some time before election I was on the alert, would have a good man picked out, would get my friends interested in the nomination. As the day approached I was active, going from one to another, urging the importance of attending to this matter. On the day of election I was not idle. I went the rounds among my friends again to see that they did not neglect their duty, and especially if there was any danger point, I guarded that in every possible way. It rarely occurred that a man hostile to the schools was elected.

It was by this eternal vigilance that we succeeded in keeping a good board. Occasionally, the opposition was too strong for us and a "kicker" would be elected. In such a case I was careful to give him every possible attention. I took pains to take him to the schools and show him their practical working, and in this way I never failed to make of him an everlasting friend to the schools. I well recall one marked case of a man who was elected on the issue of economy in the administration of the schools. He was made chairman of the executive committee. I took him the next morning after his appointment to this committee and went from building to building and showed him conditions and appurtenances. As a result, when the time came for making the budget, he was the most liberal man

on the board, and moved to advance the budget beyond what the board were willing to sanction.

It was in such ways that I gained the reputation of winning over to the interest of the schools every man however serious his opposition when elected. I doubtless deserved all the reputation I got in this way, for I made it as much my duty to train every new member of the board as to train in my new teachers. Without the backing of my board I could do nothing. I must have their hearty co-operation and support in order to accomplish anything. I am happy to be able to say that I had in this respect all I desired. They gave me *carte blanche* to get what was necessary for the schools. I never abused their confidence, and they trusted me implicitly. They invariably gave me the teachers I wanted and any necessary facilities for running the schools. In fact I had things my own way so completely that I got the title of "Pope Sheldon."

If one is to be responsible for the success of a system of schools, he must be allowed freedom in their organization and management. The Board of Education understood this, and, holding me responsible, gave me the liberty. In this way the public schools of Oswego became what I made them. I could have done little without the moral backing of a board composed of some of our most highly respected citizens. The people had confidence in them and they in me, and by the combination of these moral forces we were able to accomplish much.

At the end of the first year we were able to make a good financial showing. We demonstrated that notwithstanding the many extraordinary expenditures incident to the opening of the schools and while the number of chil-

dren in the public schools had nearly doubled, the expenses over the previous year were only \$266.83, while the range and quality of instruction given had been greatly improved. With this showing there was little danger of going back to the old system. The experience of one year had won the people to the new order, and we entered upon the new year with the feeling of confidence and permanency.



## CHAPTER XIX

### SPECIAL FEATURES—SUCCESS OF THE “MACHINE”

DURING the second year of my administration the most important new feature engrafted was the opening of what we termed “arithmetic schools.” These were a new feature, not only of Oswego, but, so far as I know, of any system of grade schools. They were designed to accommodate a class of pupils who had occupation during the summer, but were idle in the winter. The attendance was always large, often crowded. In many ways it could have been disastrous to the graded schools to have thrown this crowd of uncouth, untutored, hard, rough overgrown boys into them, provided they could have been prevailed upon to go, which is very doubtful. Had they gone, they would not have found what they wanted, and would have been brought into association with pupils much younger than themselves which would of itself have been a source of mortification to them, to say nothing of the dangerous influence on their younger associates.

What they all wanted was arithmetic, and as much of it as possible—hence the name. They usually took with this subject, reading, writing, spelling, and sometimes geography or bookkeeping. They were earnest, attentive students, and most of them accomplished a good deal of work in the winter months. It was practically a boys’

school, because no girls applied. Two of these schools were opened, one on each side of the river.\*

Evening schools were included as a part of the system from the very first. One hundred and thirty-nine pupils registered the first winter, requiring the services of Mr. I. B. Poucher and Mr. V. C. Douglass. These schools had a marked success from the very beginning.

One important measure was the establishment of an Unclassified School. This put the finishing touch to the "new system." It was an innovation on the "graded System of Public Schools." Nothing of the kind had ever been known before, but it became an essential feature of the Oswego schools, and I understand that such schools have since been opened in other cities. They ought to constitute a part of every system of closely classified public schools. They meet difficulties that constitute serious objections to such a system. It often happens that pupils come from the country, or from some other town, where there is no system of classified schools, and they are behind in some subjects required for admission to classes they would be prepared to enter in other subjects. Such pupils can enter the unclassified school and bring up the neglected subject, and thus qualify themselves to enter at the point suited to their age and other qualifications.

Again there are some pupils whose term of attendance at the public schools is necessarily short, owing to pecuniary or social conditions, and who wish to pursue special subjects important to employment in some branch of industry, perhaps bookkeeping or arithmetic, or both. Such

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\*For full reports of these and of the evening schools, see Second Annual Report of Board of Education of Oswego, pp. 18-29, from which it will be seen how essential a part of our educational system they formed.

pupils cannot give the time necessary to reach the point in the regular prescribed course, where these subjects are completed. In the classified schools they can take them up and go forward in them as rapidly as they are capable of doing, without being kept back by others.

It often happens that pupils, for one reason or another, have fallen behind the classes to which their age might otherwise entitle them. On account of their age and size they are not comfortable in the classes where their advancement in the prescribed branches of study would place them, but they can go into the unclassified school, where they will find their equals and can take up here such branches as are adapted to their advancement and press forward in them as rapidly as they are able to progress. In this way such a school meets conditions that cannot well be provided for in the regularly graded schools.\*

During the second year of the schools, much time and attention were given to a more careful classification and grading of the pupils, to the enlargement of the accommodations and in every way to the perfecting of the work begun.

The most serious embarrassment experienced was the need of greater school accommodations. The law allowed too limited an amount for building purposes to meet the demand of a growing school population. This had already doubled in a wonderful way. The private schools, of which there were a large number, had vanished in the presence of the new system, until not a single one was left. More or less of the furniture of these schools was purchased

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\*This feature was added first in 1859, much later than the two preceding.—Ed.

by the board for use in the public schools. Among these schools was the one presided over by "Brother John," which we had started. The public schools were now too popular to allow the existence of a single private school, however excellent. It was said that there were five hundred children away from home in private schools. The new system brought them home. In this way all the children of school age were brought into the public schools, and it was very difficult to provide room for them. But during the course of the year new buildings were erected, and other facilities added.

Teachers' meetings were an essential feature of the administration of the schools from the very beginning. These were held weekly, at which time I had an opportunity of giving the necessary instruction in regard to organization, classification, instruction and discipline. Without these frequent meetings with my teachers, I do not see how it would have been possible for me to carry out my plans and methods of administration and instruction. In fact I relied upon the meetings very largely for this purpose—these instructions being followed up by personal visits. The discussions dealt with principles of education and methods of teaching in detail. I have never seen the time from that day to this when I felt that I could dispense with these meetings. It is essential in every system of schools, or even in a single school, that there be unity of thought and work in order to realize the highest success, and such a state of things can only be realized by a frequent conference of the principal or superintendent with his teachers. They must understand each other perfectly and work in harmony.

Discipline was one of the subjects frequently discussed. From my present standpoint, I now seem to myself to have been what might be termed a straight, rigid disciplinarian, although not so considered at the time. Theoretically I was not, but practically I was.

I realize that I have grown away from many things that I now condemn. In no one direction is this so evident to me as in the matter of discipline. My tendency was to restrain the activities and impulses of children, while now I would encourage and cultivate them by giving them proper direction. My influence was then toward repression, but now I would give the greatest liberty possible. Repression tends to stultify and deaden the activities of the soul; freedom tends to give growth and vigor. That work is of most value to the pupil which is voluntary, which is done without restraint or compulsion. That teacher who has to resort to forceful methods to secure order or study is of very little value. The best work is done where there is a warm, sympathetic relation between teacher and pupils. The children are drawn into right doing, not driven. There is a vast difference in the value of the two processes.

I question very seriously the wisdom of our compulsory education laws. As a place of confinement, the school may be good, in that it keeps the children off the street and away from worse places, but a very large discount is deducted from the value of the education gained under such conditions. As a rule, we attribute too high importance to our compulsory laws as a means of educating the people. Freedom here, as everywhere, is essential to the best results. In our schools, direct interest must lie

at the foundation, of all true educational success. If you cannot draw a pupil to school by the interest he feels in the work, it is very questionable whether you will benefit him very much by driving him. The whole tendency of such a process is to disgust him by the driving.

For ten years I was sent to school against my wishes. I am not conscious that I derived any good from it, and I am sure that I got very much that was evil. I believe it would have been better for me if my father had listened to my wishes and allowed me to stay at home and work on the farm. I would surely have gotten some good out of the work, for in this there is genuine education.

From the very first I emphasized moral training, and had a course of formal lessons arranged in this, the same as in other subjects. The teacher was not to depend on these formal lessons alone, but to seize every occurrence on the school grounds and in the school, and treat it as an object lesson. Much must also be done in an indirect way in the life, manner and work of the teacher. For the formal work we used pictures, books and every-day incidents. As time went on, the formal work dropped out, and the indirect influences were more and more emphasized.

In those early days I attached great importance to written examinations. The last month of each year was devoted to them exclusively. They were designed as a review covering all the work done for the year as a test of its thoroughness. I personally prepared the questions for every grade. I marked the answer to every question, keeping a personal account with each pupil and teacher. The results were all tabulated and printed in the annual reports of the board and sometimes in the daily papers. In

this way I kept up a high pressure on the schools. The rivalry and competition were something tremendous. It took me a long time to learn that there was a better way, but at last the lesson was learned. I carried a straight-jacket system of close classification to its highest point of perfection, accompanied by a course of study as precise, definite and exacting as it is possible to make, tested by complete and exhaustive examinations which left no room for doubt as to the thoroughness of the work done. I have good reason for believing that I had organized and perfected the most complete educational machine that was ever constructed. By looking at my watch, I could tell exactly what every teacher in the city was doing.

At the end of the year the classes were passed up from grade to grade as result of the examinations. All that were passed from one group to another, as from Primary to Junior, from Junior to Senior, or from Senior to the High School, received certificates signed by the president and secretary of the board. They were, to all intents and purposes, diplomas, to which the children attached great importance.

In August, 1854, the State Teachers' Association had one of its annual sessions in Oswego. This was a new experience for the town. Every hotel and private house was crowded to its capacity. This was an introduction of the educational fraternity to Oswego, and an introduction of Oswego to the educational men of the State. We were better known after this meeting and the schools had grown into the confidence of the people.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE MACHINE FOUND WANTING ADVENT OF THE "OBJECTIVE SYSTEM": 1859

NOTWITHSTANDING all perfection of organization, and I think it would be very difficult to find anything more complete, there was something wanting to give life, spirit I may say, soul to the school system. As a machine it was perfect, but it lacked vitality. It was not a living organism. This I felt strongly. But exactly how to go to work to remedy the defect I did not know. I realized that our work was too formal, too much of a memorizing process. We wanted something that would wake up the pupils, set them to thinking, observing, reasoning.

About this time (1859) the superintendent of schools in Elmira, Rev. Mr. Scofield, came to see me and spend a day or two in one of our schools. I freely expressed to him my dissatisfaction, and something of the way in which it seemed to me the work of the schools might be improved. It must be more objective. But there were no facilities for carrying on such work. For this purpose we wanted collections of objects of all sorts, illustrations of every kind. We wanted more reading matter, and that which was better adapted to the ages of the children; we wanted charts of color and form, natural history, pictures, objects for teaching number, etc.

I found him fully in sympathy with my ideas, and we



then and there resolved to make a beginning in the preparation of the facilities so much needed. He agreed to prepare a set of color charts and cards accompanied by a manual of directions to teachers, and I was to prepare a set of reading charts and cards with a book to accompany the same.

This was in September, 1859. A month later, in pursuance of the plan I had adopted at the time of my first entering upon my duties as superintendent of schools—to visit one or more towns having a reputation for good schools—I went on a tour of inspection to the schools of Toronto, Ontario. To my astonishment I found here very many of the facilities I had been wishing for. Dr. Ryerson, then Minister of Education for Ontario, had been spending a year or two abroad, making a collection of all sorts of educational tools and facilities from all parts of the world. Here I found, greatly to my surprise, what I did not know existed anywhere—collections of objects, pictures, charts of colors, form, reading charts, books for teachers, giving full directions as to the use of this material. These were mostly the products of the Home and Colonial Training Institution, London.

I invested three hundred dollars in these pictures, objects and books, and hastened home a happier man than I went. I was not long in making out a new course of study for my Primary schools, introducing a complete course of objective work, employing the material brought from Toronto. This was submitted to the board, met with their approval, and was put in operation in the lowest grade of the Primary schools the following term.

A new era had come to our public schools. Important

changes were being inaugurated that were destined to revolutionize methods of teaching not only in Oswego, but in the whole country.

Illustrative of the above brief sketch, we quote the following extracts.—Ed.

*From Seventh Annual Report of Board of Education,  
Oswego, N.Y., Year Ending March 31, 1880.* {6}

#### COURSE OF STUDY

There has, for some time, been felt a necessity for a change, or at least some modification, of the programme of studies in our Primary Schools. There has been too much teaching by formulas, and not enough by oral and collateral instruction. We are quite too apt, in the education of children, to “sail over their heads”; to present subjects that are quite beyond their comprehension, or in a manner which fails to leave in the mind of the learner a clear perception of the truths inculcated. How to get out of the rut into which we had fallen seemed difficult to tell. By means of moral and object lessons, teachers had endeavored to awaken new interest and break up, in some measure, the old routine of study and recitation. These exercises were, however, without much system or order, and with but little idea of what was to be accomplished by them, and no satisfactory results were obtained. In every exercise it is of the highest importance that there should be some definite aim and purpose on the part of the teacher, and that she should work with reference to obtaining certain results. We have felt the need of proper text books or manuals, as guides for the teacher in oral instruction. This want has been, in some good degree, met in the publications of the “Home and Colonial Infant and Juvenile School Society,” of London. This society was established in the year 1836. The object with the founders of the society was to present an improved system of primary in-

struction in actual operation, and by means of model schools, give students in training an opportunity of practicing the improved system, and thoroughly prepare them for the work of infant school teachers. Through the recommendation of the committee of the society, these teachers are sent into different parts of the kingdom, as applications are made for them, to engage in the work of primary instruction. Already, upwards of 2,800 teachers, for home, colonial and foreign service, have received the benefit of this institution. The system is rapidly gaining favor, and the demand for teachers trained at their schools is beyond their ability fully to supply.

The system is founded on the principle, *"That, as the different faculties of children are developed at different periods, care should be taken to adapt their lessons to the state of their minds, in order that all the faculties may be called out in right order."*

*"That the education of the mind must begin when the exercise of the mind begins, and should follow precisely, both in degree and amount, the natural order of its development."*

*"That education consists, not in the amount which you can put into the mind from without, but in the amount which it can gain from its own development and exercise from within."*

. . . It is claimed by the authors of this system, that among the first developed in the child, are the perceptive faculties, or those faculties by which we gain a knowledge of things all around us, in the external world through the senses, and the conceptive faculties, or those faculties by which we are enabled to recall images once made upon the mind. Later, come memory, imagination, judgment, and the reasoning faculties. In accordance with this view they begin by educating the senses, by means of lessons on form, color, size, weight, objects, number, place, etc., which, with the various exercises connected therewith, are designed to

cultivate the conceptive, as well as the perceptive faculties. That the senses are capable of a high degree of cultivation is evident from the fact that where one sense is lost, it is greatly compensated for by the quickened and increased power of another . . .

Our aim is so to vary the exercises, as never to weary the children, but always to keep up a pleasant, animated and cheerful state of mind. For this purpose each lesson is made short, but the slightest degree of activity is encouraged; they do not so frequently recur as to tend to wear out the interest, but to keep it ever fresh and lively. Especial care is taken to meet and provide for the physical demands of the children, by means of frequent change of classes, gymnastics and recesses. Children of the ages of those found in our primary schools should not be kept in any one position over thirty minutes at a time. Their very being demands frequent change and activity of body. When left unconfined and free to act out the impulses of their being, they are ever in motion; all life and activity. The proper growth and development of muscle and tissue absolutely demand this. This, then, points to an unmistakable law of nature, that great teacher of teachers, whose rules and regulations bear no marks of imperfection, and the slightest violation of any of which carries with it its own penalty.

As in the transplanting of the tree from the nursery to the orchard, its continued life and unchecked growth demand that there should be as little change of circumstances, as to climate, soil and position, as possible; so in the transfer of the child from the nursery to the school-room, he should be led to feel the change as little as possible. Hence we begin with

#### CONVERSATIONAL EXERCISES.

In which home interests of every description, the toys and pets, all the little treasures of home, the plays, the em-

poyments of mother, father, brother or sister, things seen on the way to and from school, objects familiar to them, are subjects of conversation.

The teacher must begin at a point where the child feels an interest, and that which has ever been in the line of his home education. He must be made at once to feel that he is still at home; that he has only changed rooms and teachers. Encourage the little girls to bring their dolls, their tea sets, their pets, their little books and toys, and the little boys the companions of their sports and home pleasures. These, and such like topics, in which the children have been wont to feel a deep interest, should be the subjects of many familiar, pleasant little chats.

We feel in no haste to have them say their A B C. Our first aim is to acclimate them to the school-room—make them feel at home and free to express their simple thoughts.

It is important for the teacher to make them feel that she sympathizes with them in all their joys and sports; and when once this current of sympathy is unquestionably established, the way is open and clear for the teacher to form and mould the plastic mind to her own liking. These exercises are continued for the first few weeks of the child's school life, before he is put to

#### READING.

The children first begin by reading words, without spelling, as printed on the board by the teacher. At first, they only learn the names of animals, or objects, or actions, perfectly familiar with them, and, as far as possible, these objects or pictures of them, should be presented to the children and made subjects of familiar conversation, that they may become interested in them before the words are put upon the board. When they begin to spell, it is by the sounds or powers of the letters, and not by their names. The names of the letters are learned in connection with the lessons on form. The first term is devoted to conversational exercises, and learning words on the board, and the

next two terms to the Progressive Primer, and spelling by the sounds of the letters. The first term of the second year they begin to spell by the names of the letters.

#### PHYSICAL ACTIONS AND EMPLOYMENTS

The object of this exercise is to cultivate, in children, the habit of *accurate* observation on what they see done; make them imitate and describe actions performed before them. With beginners, these exercises must be of a very simple character. As they advance, their "observation takes a wider range." They are required to observe actions of a more complicated character; to perform actions as directed, to name and describe actions done in their presence, or which they may have previously observed. Accuracy of expression is particularly attended to at this step. Among others, a very pretty exercise with laths may be had, by arranging them in certain forms, and then requiring the children to reproduce them after the laths are removed, or require them to make like forms upon the board or on their slates. Or, as a variety, the teacher may make certain forms on the board, and the children imitate them with the laths. These exercises, however, more properly belong to

#### LESSONS ON FORM.

For the first exercises on form the teacher has a set of twenty, or more, regular geometrical forms, cut out of wood for the purpose, as the square, triangle, parallalogram, rhomboid, circle, etc., two of each kind, with a large card on which these forms are represented. The teacher holds up a wooden form, and asks the pupils to select one like it from those on the table, and a vote of the class is taken to decide whether they regard it as correct; thus exercising the observation of the whole class at the same time. If incorrect, let another make the effort, until a correct selection is made. This exercise may be varied by holding up a form, and asking a pupil to point to a like

form on the card; or, pointing to a form on the card, ask for the selection of a like form from the table, always testing the sense of the class as to the correctness of the selection.

The same exercises are had with both capital and small letters, and Roman numerals. These exercises are among the most simple of those given under this head, and are had with the younger classes; a little farther on, they are taught the names of these forms, including letters and numerals. With these forms are lessons to develop the idea of sides, corners and angles.

Under this head come lessons on length, breadth, depth and surface. Various geometrical solids are introduced, and their parts considered.

(Here follows a description of various exercises for training the sense of Size. Next come accounts of lessons on Colors; on Pictures of Common Objects (arousing memory and original oral expressions); the Human Body; Weight; Place (introductory to Geography); Number:—all based on observation of objects or pictures brought before the pupils.

To these are added systematic "Lessons on Objects," on Animals and Plants. Drawing is assigned a prominent position, a long plea for its usefulness occurring in this Report.—ED.)



## CHAPTER XXI

### LIFE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

JUST at this point I realize that I am considering only that part of my life which related to my school work. A good friend of mine once said to me: "You eat, drink and sleep schools." In this there is a strong vein of truth. It is true that I have lived largely for the schools. My life has been emphatically that of a School Man. I have given to the schools my best thoughts and energies. My educational ideas and plans have been largely my own. I do not mean by this that I was the first to think and plan. I can claim very little that I have thought and planned as new. Other men had thought and planned everything before me. Pestalozzi covered the whole field of educational reform long before my day, but I had never heard of Pestalozzi. I had read very little and knew nothing of educational theories and principles. My knowledge of educational principles was largely intuitive. I do not speak this in a boastful way, but rather in the spirit of humility. What little of educational knowledge I may have possessed was given to me. My life has been too full of pressing activities to allow much reading or study. I have reflected much, but it has all been in the midst of the most active work. Yet much as I have given to the schools, they have not wholly monopolized my time and thoughts.



As I have already shown, I have decidedly rural tastes and propensities. This was clearly indicated by my horticultural employments and subsequent employment in the nursery business. These early loves, fostered while yet a boy on the farm never left me. This proclivity may have been good for me in that it gave me diversion and recreation, which, no doubt, were essential to me in the more serious work of life. At the same time it brought with it dangers that needed to be guarded against. My tendency was to throw my whole thought and life into whatever I put my hand to do. This led to the temptation of giving too much time and attention to that which had no direct bearing on my life-work, and which duty required should be kept always subservient to it. I now realize that, at times, I yielded too much to this love for rural pursuits and gave them more of my time and attention than I ought to have given. Another unfortunate attendant on this propensity was a temptation to spend money where it never brought any returns. It often led me into debt and devoured my income.

It will be remembered that in selling to Mr. Allen my interest in the Oswego nurseries, I took in pay city lots, located near the nurseries. Some of these I sold, taking contracts with small annual payments. The others I exchanged for a wood-lot out in the country ten or twelve miles away, in the town of Sterling, which in turn I exchanged later for a small white house on West Sixth Street, near Oneida. It was in the fall of 1854 that this exchange of property was made, and the following spring we went into our own house to live. It was small and unpretentious, but we lived in it very comfortably, and I may

add, happily—although that need hardly be said, for we were always happy. We never knew any other conditions. Here Charles and Lizzie were born, the former on August 7, 1855, and the latter April 12, 1857.

At one time our little home came very near being buried in the snow. It was in the winter of 1853. It was late one Saturday night, after my duties as librarian were over and I had closed my office, that I started for home in a heavy snowstorm. I went up Oneida Street, and after passing the M. E. Church I got away from the sidewalk and into a vacant lot, where now stands the M. E. parsonage, just back of the church. I saw only the street lamps on every side of me and for a moment was lost, not knowing which way to go. I soon got my bearings and found my way to my gate, or, at least, to the place where I thought it ought to be. No gate was to be seen, however, and on putting out my hands to climb over what appeared to be a bank of snow a head with two horns came up into the air before me, loaded with snow. It appeared that a cow had strayed and taken her stand at my gate, where the heavy snow had completely buried her. As I put my hands on her rump she lifted her horns, and in so doing made a very strange impression on her intruder. I, however, soon recovered my composure, and having assured myself that it was nothing but a cow, proceeded to get her out, and thus gained free access to my gate and the house.

This proved to be the severest snowstorm that has been known in Oswego since that day. The storm continued for three days with unabated fury, filling the streets with snow and obstructing all travel. Practically all business

was suspended. The schools were closed. Neither teachers nor pupils could get to them. I did not, in fact, could not, leave my house for three days. I got out of the chamber window into a plum tree that stood near, and shoveled off the snow to prevent the accumulating weight of it from breaking the tree to pieces. At the end of three days I went out the back door, and coming around to the front gate dug a tunnel to the front door, and through this tunnel we passed out and in for many days. At this time I saw some of the smaller houses literally buried in the snow, with hardly more than a chimney to show the existence of a house.

One Sunday the snow came down abundantly in large and feathery flakes during all the morning. It lay like down on the ground, several inches deep. Soon after dinner a slight wind sprang up and the snow began to move. I had an appointment every Sunday afternoon at the Orphan Asylum, having charge of the orphan Sunday School. I hesitated a little, but decided to go, as it was not my custom to stop for any ordinary storm. The wind continued to increase in force during my stay in the Sunday School for an hour and a half, and when I came out the air was literally filled with snow. The front fence was buried. I managed to plant my feet on the top board and gave a leap into the street, but sank in the snow to my neck. By lying down and crawling I managed to extricate myself and stood upright in the middle of the street. As I looked about me I could not see a building in any direction, even the asylum was hidden from my view. In one direction lay the open country and in the other the city.

Being somewhat dazed by the snow, instead of going toward the town, as I could see no landmarks of any kind, I started out into the open fields. After going some distance and seeing no house, I began to suspect that I had taken the wrong direction and turned about to retrace my steps. The situation began to be somewhat serious. I had already become somewhat exhausted by my exertions. Soon, however, I came to houses, but the fences were buried and it was difficult to keep the road. In one man's dooryard I struggled in the snow for many minutes and when, at last, I reached home I was completely exhausted. I had been literally "lost in the snow" in a town of fifteen thousand inhabitants. Such snowstorms, however, were not frequent. They were the exception, and have become more and more rare since that day.

## CHAPTER XXII

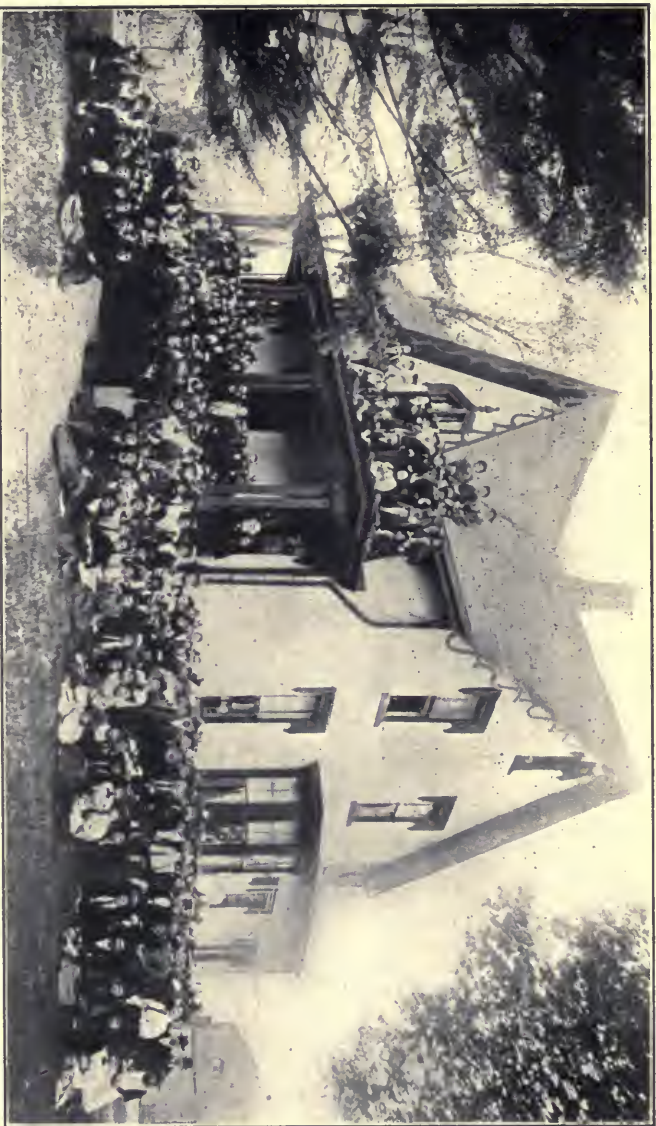
### OUR HOME

IT is good for anyone to have a home. We felt it to be so. Although small, it was our home and we enjoyed it. I am happy to say that we have never since that day known what it is to be without one. In this little white cottage we experienced all that a home can give—health and sickness, joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, the usual accompaniments of the home, were ours. Health, joy and hope so greatly predominated, however, that they gave a bright coloring to the whole of life.

I had very little opportunity here for gratifying my taste for horticulture. We had a grape-vine or two and a few garden things that flourished. But I wanted more room—nothing but a few broad acres would satisfy me. An opportunity to gratify this desire presented itself in the autumn of '56, when I purchased eight acres of woodland on the shore of Lake Ontario. It was my ideal site for a home. Here was a great variety of trees and flowers. It was to this lakeside grove that I used to bring my classes in botany when I had the private school in the United States Hotel. This was the wood nearest to the city, and was always a favorite resort for classes in botany and natural history. The woods, the lake and the open country around were very attractive to me, and the temptation to purchase and make our home in this lovely spot was more

than I could resist. I could buy it with a promise to pay, and my natural hopefulness led me to believe that sometime or somehow I could pay for it. At first I bought but four acres, promising to pay twelve hundred dollars. A little later I added 'four more, promising to pay two thousand dollars. I borrowed money of my brother and prepared to build a house. It seems to me that the actual occupation has hardly given me more pleasure than these preparations. I have sometimes thought the day I took my axe and went into the woods for the purpose of laying out my drive was about the happiest one of my whole life. I never felt myself alone in the woods. To me the presence of trees is real company. They have real voices and give me a sense of genuine spiritual presence. Each tree has its own personality, a character all its own.

I blazed the trees I desired to have cut to clear the way for the drive, and sent a man to cut them. Contrary to instructions, he cut a fine thrifty young elm near the entrance. This was a great grief to me. I could not repair the loss, and so grieved on for a long time over the irreparable loss, and I mourned for it as for a 'friend that had gone and could not return. I had another experience of a different sort that strongly impressed me. When I came to locate my house I found the stump of an old hemlock tree that had been turned over in the wind, a little in my way, and I thought to burn it up. I piled brush and rubbish upon it and kept up a fire all one day. At night I found I had merely blackened the bark on the outside. I then turned it back to its place and allowed it to stay, locating the house a little farther to the south than I had intended. The stump held its place for ten years, covered



"SHADY SHORE."





with vines and ornamental shrubs. Such was the respect I paid to the tenacity of the old stump.

The house I decided to build was somewhat peculiar in its structure. I put up a light frame and embedded it in concrete. This made a very warm and durable house. It was built in the fall of '57. The next spring we moved into our new quarters. Here we were destined to live until removed by death. Here Anna and Laura were born, and here the children were reared, and this was practically the only home they ever knew. Here the girls were all married, and here three of the grand-children were born.

As may well be surmised, the associations of this home became greatly endeared to us, and had much to do in the formation of the character of the children. The house was finished off by slow stages, and was not all completed until Mary was out of college and wanted to occupy the "long room" with her friend, Dr. Lee. This large front room across the hall from the parlors had been intended for the library, but until this time had been left in an unfinished state and occupied as a sort of lumber and store room. It was now finished off, and in the course of time was devoted to its original purpose.

*Extract from a letter to Sister Dorliska.*

Oswego, November 18, 1856.

I have great reason to bless a kind Heavenly Father for many rich and unmerited blessings, spiritual and temporal, which he has bestowed upon me; and among the richest of them all, he has heard my prayer in opening to me a wide door of usefulness. I can hardly conceive of any position to which he could have called me, where I could have more power for doing good than the one I occupy,

and it is my constant and earnest prayer that I may be fitted for all its duties, and eminently useful in it. I need much wisdom and grace, great patience and discretion—pray with and for me that I may be abundantly supplied with them.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE OSWEGO TRAINING SCHOOL FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS: 1861

I HAVE traced very briefly the progress of the schools of Oswego from the time of their organization up to that of my visit to Toronto and the issuing of my new course of study.

This plan embraced, among other things, a course of elementary science work, or what is now-a-days termed "nature study." This was the first effort, so far as I know, to introduce systematic objective work into all subjects and through all grades of the public schools. Any history of education that is hereafter written must give us the credit for this.

At the outset I began this work in the lowest, or first-year grade. I gave my undivided attention to this grade for the first year. I met the teachers every Saturday, laid out work for the coming week, discussed principles and methods with them and then gave my whole time, the following week, to seeing that the work was properly carried out in their rooms. The second year I did the same thing for the second grade.

I found, however, before long that I was preparing teachers for other schools. As soon as they were well trained into their work, they received an invitation to go elsewhere at salaries in advance of what our board would

give. At one time, nine of my best teachers were taken away from me. This was very discouraging, as it thus became necessary for me to be continually training new teachers. In a small way I was running a training school. It did not require much reflection to convince me that I was undertaking more than I could well accomplish, and I proposed to the board that we should establish a city training school for the training of primary teachers. To this they readily assented, as the proposition seemed a reasonable one. I outlined a plan for such a school which met with their approval.

The plan contemplated taking graduates from our own and other high schools, or persons of equal scholastic attainments and giving them one year of strictly professional training. One half of the time was to be given to a discussion of educational principles and their application to teaching the elementary branches, and the other half to teaching under criticism. The plan, I am still satisfied, viewing from this distance of time, was as good as could have been devised under the conditions that existed.

The next question was, who should be the teacher of this (Oswego Primary Teachers' Training School, as I decided to call it. This was a more difficult question to decide than the creation of the plan for such a school. There was no one in the country who, so far as I knew, had the necessary ideas and experiences for the running of my training school. No such school existed in America, and the methods of instruction were quite as new as the design of the school. In this dilemma I decided to go abroad for a teacher. In London, England, was the Home and Colonial Training Institution. Although organized on

a different plan from my own, it was training teachers on Pestalozzian principles. This was just what I wanted to do. Some of the books procured in Canada were the outgrowth of this institution. I resolved to secure, if possible, a teacher from this school.

I accordingly opened a correspondence with its secretary, to ascertain whether such a teacher could be obtained, and on what conditions. As I sat writing this letter, Hon. A. C. Mattoon who always seconded my movements most heartily said to me: "Tell them we want a person who can introduce these methods into this country."

In due time a letter came in answer to mine, saying that Miss Margaret E. M. Jones, who had been a teacher with them for eighteen years, had consented to come at a salary of one thousand dollars and all living expenses. This seemed to our board a very large sum to pay, and they hesitated. But I said to them: "If you will appoint this woman, I will guarantee to the board that it shall not cost the city one cent," and on the strength of this they offered the resolution, being careful to put into it my guarantee that "it should not cost the city one cent."

I was careful to keep my word with them, and showed them at the end of the year that Miss Jones had not only been no expense to them, but had actually put into the treasury three hundred dollars over and above expenses. It was done in this way. In the first place I charged a tuition of fifty dollars to all persons not residents of Oswego who joined the class. In the second place I persuaded a number of the more progressive teachers to contribute one-half of their salary for the year, in view of the benefit that would come to them from the instructions of the

"London Training Teacher." In the third place, by converting one of the schools into a school of practice, I saved the salary of one teacher. In this way I made the training school a help rather than a hindrance to the finances of the board.

This movement was going on in the spring of 1861, and in May the school was opened with Miss Jones at the head.

The arrival of Miss Jones was quite an event. Mr. Mattoon and I went to the train to meet her. We stood on the platform waiting at the time announced by her telegram. As no one left the cars whom we could call the London lady, we boarded the train, but to our astonishment we found no one but an unpromising looking woman with a weather-stained face, and in a stooping position, half buried in boxes and bundles.

We could not entertain the thought that this was our importation and passed her by, but as there was no other person in the car, we could but inquire if this was Miss Jones. To our great chagrin she proved to be the veritable Miss Jones; but between Mr. Mattoon and me, we managed to review her and her bundles and get her onto the platform. Mr. Mattoon kindly invited her to his home until we could arrange a permanent boarding place for her.

Miss Jones entered at once upon her duties, and when she was fairly over the effects of her sea voyage and travel, and the skin no longer peeled from her face, but was restored to its natural color, her appearance improved greatly; and as time went on it became very evident to all that we had the services of no ordinary woman. She

proved herself to be all that was represented to us, and fully equal to the work she had undertaken.

The school was opened in a wooden school building that stood on the west side of West Fourth Street, near Bridge Street, about half-way between the First M. E. Church and the First Presbyterian Church. In this building was a primary school of perhaps two hundred children, which constituted the practice school. There was also a junior school in the same building, but with this we had nothing to do.

In the regular training class were nine pupils. Miss Jones met her class for special instruction and direction in a small cloak-room off from the school of practice. The accommodations were very limited, and so was the class.

For the purpose of giving opportunity to attend Miss Jones' class, to those teachers who cared to gain a knowledge of the "new methods," the schools were closed at an early hour in the afternoon. At 3.30 she met these teachers, in connection with her regular class, and discussed general principles underlying teaching, and their applications in teaching the various branches. In the same way she met them every Saturday morning. By this plan all the teachers in the public schools who were interested had the opportunity to get the general plan and scope of Miss Jones' work. Some entered into it at once with enthusiasm. Others looked on with doubtful minds but as the work progressed they caught the spirit of it and became deeply interested, while others showed a total indifference to the whole plan, and a small number were active in their opposition. Little attention was given to the indifferent or the opposers; we had with us the wide-awake, progressive

teachers, and these comprised the greater number. Among these were some who subsequently made their influence strongly felt in wide educational circles.

In addition to the regular school of practice, we had one model school, used exclusively as a school of observation, and one school taught successively by the members of the training class. These schools were in the Academy building. This was the first Teachers' Training School ever organized in America. They are now to be found in nearly every populous city, but I have yet to learn that any radical improvement has been made on the "Oswego Training School."\*

The work of introducing these objective methods into the successive grades in the public schools went steadily on under the constant and careful supervision of the superintendent, and very commendable progress was being made.

At the end of the year, the period for which Miss Jones was employed, she indicated her intention of returning to England. She was, however, induced to remain until the close of the summer term.

It was at this time that the question arose as to who should be principal of this training school when Miss Jones

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\*The first "Normal" schools in America were established in Massachusetts—one at Lexington and one at Barre. Mr. Sheldon claims the first "Training" school. He refers to the training of teachers in the actual practice of their profession, which was not included in the work of the earlier "Normal" schools. The need of the "Training" school was recognized and acknowledged by leading educational men of the day. A very complete and interesting thesis on the "Rise and Growth of the Normal-School Idea in the U. S.," by Prof. J. P. Gordy, constitutes Circular of Information No. 8, 1891, from the Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C. (It can be obtained free on application.) Gordy says: "The history of the Normal School at Oswego, N. Y., constituted an important chapter, not only in the history of training teachers, but in the history of the public schools of this country." He presents an exhaustive history of the school and its influence, and a description of its work. He further points out its secondary influence, as the parent of the Worcester Normal School.—Ed.



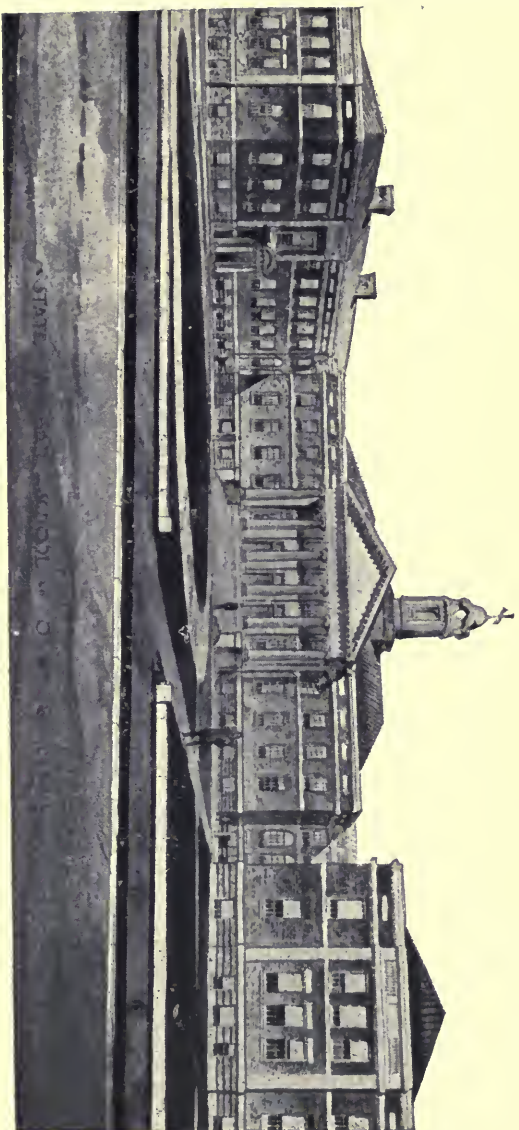
should leave. Among those who had taken an active interest in the work was Mr. E. D. Weller, principal of Senior School No. 1. He was a graduate of the Albany Normal School, and had proved himself an intelligent, efficient teacher. I proposed to the board that he be made principal. Mr. Weller hesitated about accepting it, being doubtful as to the final outcome of the experiment. When Miss Jones heard of my proposition to make Mr. Weller principal, she went to the members of the board and stoutly protested, insisting that Mr. Sheldon should be made principal. To her recommendation the board listened rather than to my own, and I was thus made Miss Jones' successor—a position to which I did not aspire, and for which I seemed to myself to have no suitable qualifications. I yielded, however, to the urgent solicitations of Miss Jones and the board.

## CHAPTER XXIV

EXTRACTS FROM EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT OF BOARD OF  
EDUCATION, OSWEGO, N. Y., 1861

. . . Viewing the past from our present standpoint, it seems to us there has been little system or philosophic principle involved in our methods of teaching in this country. We have paid little regard to the philosophy of the human mind, to its various attributes, the order of their development and the subjects of study, and modes of presenting them to the different states and stages of such development. We have treated the mind too much as though it was composed of but two faculties, the memory and reason; and the severity with which these were taxed was the true measure of success in mental discipline. In prosecuting this idea, it would sometimes seem as though we had almost ignored the understanding, as not worthy of being taken into account, or misapprehended its real power and the true sources of its development. Here we have taken quite too much for granted. It is just here that the most fatal mistake is liable to be committed. We begin by teaching the unknown through the medium of things, or their symbols or representatives, which are equally unknown.

We require the child to repeat the tables without giving him the slightest conception as to the character of these numbers, or what they represent. He says six times six are thirty-six, six times seven are forty-two, without having first formed a correct and definite idea as to how much thirty-six or forty-two really are. He says nine is contained in sixty-three seven times, in eighty-one nine times,



Oswego State Normal and Training School (New Building).



but has no just idea of the process herein involved. He repeats three feet make one yard, twenty-five pounds one quarter, three miles one league, without having been previously taught what a foot, a pound and a mile are. We are continually describing objects by their position, form, size, weight, color and number, without stopping to consider that the child has never been taught the true meaning of the terms we are using. If describing an animal, we say he is six feet long from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail, weighs forty pounds, is of a fawn color, and can run a mile in five minutes. But in all this we have conveyed no accurate idea of this animal to the child. He has yet to learn what a foot, a pound, a mile and a minute mean; and of color he absolutely knows nothing. We say of an object it is oblong, or triangular, or octagonal, or rhomboidal in some of its parts, has certain sides parallel, perpendicular, horizontal or inclined, but not one of these terms conveys any clearly defined idea to the child, for the very simple reason that the meaning of these terms has never been properly taught him. These names have never been applied to these forms and lines while under the inspection of his senses, those faithful teachers upon which he solely relies for all his early acquisitions in knowledge.

Thus we are continually taxing the memory with, to him, unmeaning names and terms, and undertake to teach him to reason, before this faculty has scarcely any perceptible development, by giving him formulas to repeat, which convey to his mind no clearly defined ideas. In all this we are satisfied with mere form, without the substance; and can it be doubted that such a process fails to give us symmetrical, harmonious development? The habit in the child of accepting words and forms without thoughts is in itself highly injurious. In this we are teaching him to be superficial; a pernicious influence that will follow him in all his future progress.

## PESTALOZZIAN SYSTEM—ITS AIMS

The system which we have adopted is justly termed Pestalozzian, for to Pestalozzi, that greatest of all modern reformers in education, may be credited the development, and in many important points, the origin of those ideas which lie at the basis of this system. It is true that these ideas, and the modes of applying them in the development of the human faculties, have been somewhat modified and improved during the experience of half a century, but they are none the less the real thoughts and discoveries of this great philosopher. Its principles have become more or less widely diffused, but have been more generally and thoroughly incorporated with the methods of teaching in many of the countries of Europe, than in our own . . .

This plan claims to begin, where other systems have ever failed to commence, at the *beginning*, and *here* laying surely and firmly the foundation, to proceed carefully and by natural and progressive steps to rear the superstructure, ever adapting the means to the results to be attained. Following this course, we first begin with things, the qualities of which are cognizable to the senses of the children—awaken, lead out, and guide the observation and quicken perception. That the observation may be the more accurate, the various senses are carefully cultivated. These are the earliest, and in childhood, the most strongly developed of the human faculties. This fact must settle, beyond a doubt, the correctness of this mode of procedure. Says Herbert Spencer: "Every faculty during the period of its greatest activity—the period in which it is spontaneously evolving itself—is capable of receiving more vivid impressions than at any other period." Moreover, if we fail just at the right time to cultivate this, like every other faculty similarly treated, it becomes blunted and dull, and comparatively incapable of vigorous and healthy action. Now these senses gain development by coming in contact

with surrounding objects, in discovering their visible and tangible qualities.

There is a point here, however, that should be carefully guarded. The danger is, that we shall begin with the complex, a point which the child can only reach through the medium of the simple, indecomposable elements. "Following, therefore, the necessary law of progression from the simple to the complex, we should provide for the infant a sufficiency of objects presenting different degrees and kinds of resistance, a sufficiency of objects reflecting different amounts and qualities of light, and a sufficiency of sounds contrasted in their loudness, their pitch and their timbre."\* We begin then by presenting simple forms, and the primitive and more distinctive colors. Once familiar with these, the children are led to trace them in the objects of nature about them, and lastly to observe their various resultant combinations. In each object their attention is called to the individual characteristics or qualities which, combined, constitute the object, and distinguish it from every other object.

From the concrete they are led to the abstract. Through the medium of things known they are led to the unknown. They are now prepared to form clear conceptions of things they have never seen, through the medium of things they have seen.

#### THE TRAINING SCHOOL—ITS OBJECTS

Some of the principal reasons which led the Board to establish this school are given in a report of the Committee on Teachers, and in the remarks of the president, found in another part of this report; and therefore little need be said here in explanation. It is to be a kind of practising school, where beginners serve their apprenticeship. In many mechanical trades, years of toilsome apprenticeship have to be served out before the artisan is trusted alone

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\*Herbert Spencer.

with his tools. If then such great care is taken to prepare for his work, him who has to form the senseless block of wood or marble into lines and forms of beauty, how much more, infinitely more important is it that he who has to mould and give form and symmetry to the immortal mind, should make some preparation for his work; should at least receive some hints and suggestions from a master's hands. He ought also to have some understanding of his subject, as well as the tools he is to use, and the best method of using them. Pupils are expected to spend one year in observation and practice in this school, before receiving an appointment to teach in our city schools. At least one half of each day is to be spent in this way, and the other portion in study and recitation in those branches of natural history and mental science of immediate importance in connection with this system of instruction. Two hours each day will also be devoted to instruction in methods of teaching. Primary School No. 4 has been selected for this Model School. There are accommodations here for three pupil teachers to be engaged in practice at the same time. The teacher who is to organize and take charge of this school for the coming year is a lady who has for fifteen years had charge of an important department of the Home and Colonial Training Institution, Gray's Inn Road, London, a school established by a pupil and friend of Pestalozzi twenty years ago, for the preparation of teachers for the work of primary instruction on philosophic and Christian principles. So that the training of teachers is with her a profession. In this arrangement the Board hopes not only to greatly benefit and improve our own schools, but be the means of introducing the system into the country under the most favorable auspices. The Normal Schools of several different States have already made arrangements to send representatives here to become familiar with this system, for the purpose of introducing it into these institutions. — Some of our best and most experienced teachers



at home, and several from abroad have also arranged to join this class . . .

*Remarks by C. T. Richardson, President of Board of  
Education at the public exercises of the High  
School: (1861)*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—As the Board of Education has decided upon some changes not only in the organization of the High School, but in the system of teaching to be pursued in the other schools of the city, it has been thought best that at this time I should make some explanation of those changes, of the reason for them, and their cost, that the Board may not be accused of innovating rashly, or of trying experiments from which no good may be expected; or the taxpayers be afflicted with those qualms to which they are so liable.

From a partial trial during the past year in the Primary Schools, which has been very satisfactory, and from information obtained from various sources, the Board has decided to introduce as far as practicable the system of teaching known as Pestalozzian, the basis of which is Object Lessons.

It will be necessary to make a brief explanation of the system.

The name originated with Pestalozzi, a Swiss philanthropist of Italian extraction, who first, about one hundred years ago, among the children of Switzerland introduced its distinctive characteristics. Since his time it has been modified and improved, and his ideas have been established and developed, until under one name or another they form the basis of all truly philosophical mental culture. The central ideas of the system are as follows:

First.—That all education should be according to the natural order of development of the human faculties.

Second.—That all knowledge is derived in the first instance from the perceptions of the senses, and therefore

that all instructions should be based upon the observation of real objects and occurrences.

Third.—That the object of primary education is to give a harmonious cultivation to the faculties of the mind, and not to communicate technical knowledge.

The development of the faculties of the mind in the natural order is in this wise: First the power to receive impressions; after that the power to conceive thoughts; after that the power to reason. In other words, the Sense, the Understanding, and the Reason.

The proper method, then, consists in presenting to the child's mind the quality of knowledge suited to its state of development. The ordinary method disregards this principle and is frequently just the reverse of this practice. In arithmetic, for example, the children are taught to repeat rules. Now a rule is a generalization from many simple facts, and to a child ignorant of those facts conveys no idea whatever, although it may repeat it by an effort of memory.

By the new method the idea of number is made familiar to the child by appealing to the faculties that are already developed; that is, by showing them objects, marbles, pebbles, etc. When the idea of concrete number is obtained, they are led to dispense with the objects and deal with figures which are symbols and rules which are abstract.

How many children can repeat the ordinary tables of weight and measure, but how few have any real conception of what constitutes an inch or a pound?

Usually a child is taught as a vessel is laden at the wharf, in bulk; facts are thrown in loose without any regard to the fitness of the child's faculties to receive them, and when a certain amount has been committed to memory the child is considered educated. The true course is to present no other facts, and those no faster than can be assimilated and organized into the mind. By this method, education answers its definition; it is to *lead out* the facul-

ties. It is organic—it is growth from within, not an addition from without. It is just the difference between knowledge chemically combined with the child's mind, and knowledge mechanically held in solution.

Take the growing plant putting forth in all directions its roots and fibres seeking food. But put the right elements in its way and the plant will organize them into its growth, varying its demands according to its different stages, obstinately refusing at a later period what it obstinately demanded at an earlier, and *vice versa*, till we have first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. So with a child's mind. If when it requires simple impressions on the senses you feed it with complex abstractions, it pines and withers, or at best attains but the development of one faculty at the expense of the rest. But if you place before it the right elements, it absorbs them, organizes them, each faculty taking what it needs, till the simple elements reappear, in the leaf, the flower, the ripe fruit of vigorous healthy mental growth.

It is in simply placing in the child's way the knowledge suited to its natural requirements that the art of Teaching consists. The Teacher must furnish the material at the right time. The child must educate itself.

## CHAPTER XXV

### AN EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

EXTRACTS FROM NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF BOARD OF  
EDUCATION, OSWEGO, N. Y., 1862.

AT THE request of several gentlemen interested in these improved methods of primary instruction the Board of Education issued the following call for a meeting of a few of the leading educators of the country to examine into these methods and make a report, setting forth their views in regard to its value and importance as a system of primary education, and as to the practicability of its general introduction into the schools of the country:

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#### EDUCATIONAL MEETING

OFFICE OF BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Oswego, Dec. 2, 1861.

Mr. ....  
.....

Dear Sir:—

In accordance with a resolution of the Board of Education, we desire to call your attention to a system of Primary Instruction we have been introducing into our Public Schools, from the Training School of the Home and Colonial School Society, London.

We are so much pleased with its principles and practical working, that we wish to invite a careful examination of it, on the part of the leading educators of the country. For this purpose, at the suggestion of several persons interested in the movement, the Board of Education has decided to invite the following gentlemen, together with such others as may desire to attend, to meet at Oswego, on

Tuesday, the 11th day of February next, to give the subject such examination as they may desire:

Hon. V. M. RICE, Supt. Public Instruction of State of New York;  
D. H. COCHRAN, Prin. of State Normal School, Albany, New York;

S. B. WOOLWORTH, LL.D., Sec'y of Board of Regents, New York;

Dr. FISHER, Pres't. of Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y.;

Dr. HILL, Pres't. of Antioch College, Ohio;

Dr. ANDERSON, Pres't of Rochester University, New York;

J. W. BULKLEY, Superintendent of Schools, Brooklyn, N. Y.;

S. S. RANDALL, Superintendent of Schools, New York City;

GEO. L. FARNHAM, Superintendent of Schools, Syacuse, N. Y.;

S. W. STARKWEATHER, Superintendent of Schools, Rochester, N. Y.;

Prof. E. L. YOUMANS, New York;

JAS. CRUIKSHANK, Ed., *N. Y. Teacher*;

J. D. PHILBRICK, Supt. of Schools, Boston, Mass.;

DAVID N. CAMP, State Superintendent of Schools, Conn.;

WM. F. PHELPS, Prin. of State Normal School, N. J.;

THO. H. BURROWS, Supt. of Com. Schools, State of Pa.;

J. S. ADAMS, Sec'y Board Education, Vt.;

W. H. WELLS, Sup't Schools, Chicago, Ill.;

Dr. RYERSON, Supt. Public Instruction, U. C.;

Hon. HENRY BARNARD, Hartford, Ct.;

Rev. B. G. NORTHROP, State Agent, Bd. Education, Mass.;

Prof. HERMANN KRUSI, Lancaster, Mass.;

HENRY B. WILBUR, M. D., Supt. of New York State Asylum for Imbeciles, Syracuse, N. Y.;

W. D. HUNTLEY, Prin. Exper. Dept. State Normal School, Albany, N. Y.;

THO. F. HARRISON, Prin. Greenwich Av. School, New York City;

Miss L. E. KETCHUM, Prin. of the Experimental Dept. State Normal School, Bloomington, Ill.,  
and others.

We shall be happy to welcome you to the hospitality of our citizens during your stay with us, and afford you every possible facility to further the object of your visit. We shall also be pleased

to have you associate with you such other persons as you may desire.

We adopt this course for the purpose of calling public attention to what we regard as a great improvement in the methods of primary instruction usually pursued in this country, with the hope that it may result in promoting a reformation which we deem of the highest importance to the cause of education.

We shall endeavor to have such papers read before the committee as will give a clear idea of the essential features of this system; also, illustrate fully the methods of teaching, and give an opportunity of seeing its practical working in the school-room. We hope the committee will take ample time to make a thorough and satisfactory examination. We think it will require not less than three or four days. This, however, will be left to the option of the committee—as the extent and method of the examination will be left entirely to them. . . .

Very respectfully yours,

RICHARD OLIPHANT, President.

E. A. SHELDON, Secretary.

At this meeting the following persons were present and acted on the committee:

S. B. WOOLWORTH LL. D., Sec'y Board of Regents, Albany, N. Y.;

EMERSON W. KEYES, Deputy Supt. Pub. Instruction, N. Y.;

Hon. DAVID N. CAMP, State Sup't Schools, Conn., and Principal of the State Normal School;

GEO. L. FARNHAM, Sup't Schools, Syracuse, N. Y.;

S. W. STARKWEATHER, Sup't Schools, Rochester, N. Y.;

HENRY B. WILBUR, M. D., Sup't New York State Asylum for Idiots, Syracuse, N. Y.;

Prof. D. H. COCHRAN, Prin. State Normal School, Albany, N. Y.;

Prof. WM. F. PHELPS, Prin. State Normal School, Trenton, N. J.;

W. D. HUNTLEY, Prin. Experimental Department, State Normal School, Albany, N. Y.;

Miss L. E. KETCHUM, Prin. of the Experimental Department, State Normal School, Bloomington, Ill.;

THOS. F. HARRISON, Prin. Greenwich Av. School, New York City;

W. NICOLL, School Commissioner, Suffolk Co., N. Y.;

JAS. CRUIKSHANK, Editor *New York Teacher*, Albany, N. Y. ;  
Dr. M'CLELLAN, Clerk of the Board of Education, Patterson, N. J.

The following gentlemen were appointed a special committee to prepare the report :

Prof. W. F. PHELPS,  
Prof. D. H. COCHRAN,  
Hon. DAVID N. CAMP,  
THOS. F. HARRISON, Esq.,  
H. B. WILBUR, M. D.,  
W. NICOLL, Esq.,  
GEO. L. FARNHAM, Esq.

The committee spent three days in this examination. . . .

At the close of the convention, Prof. Phelps, in behalf of the committee, read a lengthy and able report which has been published under the direction of the Board of Education, by Harper & Bro., New York, in connection with a full and detailed report of all the lessons given and exercises had, together with the papers read by Miss Jones and Mr. Calkins, and therefore need not be repeated here. We will simply quote the conclusion of the report :

1. That the principles of that system are philosophical and sound ; that they are founded in, and are in harmony with the nature of man, and hence are best adapted to secure to him such an education as will conduce in the highest degree to his welfare and happiness, present and future.

2. That the particular methods of instruction presented in the exercises before us as illustrative of those principles, merit and receive our hearty approbation, subject to such modifications as experience and the characteristics of our people may determine to be wise and expedient.

In conclusion, the Committee beg leave to present in the form of resolutions the following recommendations :

*"Resolved*, That in the opinion of your Committee, the System of Object Teaching is admirably adapted to cultivate the perceptive faculties of the child, to furnish him with clear conceptions and the power of accurate expression, and thus to prepare him for the prosecution of the sciences or the pursuits of active life ; and that the Committee do recommend the adoption of the system in whole or in part, wherever such introduction is practicable.

*"Resolved*, That this system of primary education, which substitutes in great measure the *teachers for the book*, demands in its

instructors varied knowledge and thorough culture; and *that attempts to introduce it by those who do not clearly comprehend its principles, and who have not been trained in its methods, can only result in failure.*"

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed) WM. F. PHELPS,  
D. H. COCHRAN,  
DAVID N. CAMP,  
THOMAS F. HARRISON,  
H. P. WILBUR,  
GEO. L. FARNHAM,  
W. NICOLL,

Special Committee on Report.

Approved by the General Committee, and read before the Convention, in Doolittle Hall, on Thursday evening, February 13th, 1862.

From several gentlemen who were unable to meet with the Committee, very interesting letters were received, manifesting their lively interest in the movement. The following are extracts from two of them:

Hartford, Ct., Feb. 3, 1862.

DEAR SIR—It would give me great pleasure to attend the exercises, illustrative of the system of Primary Instruction introduced by you and the Board of Education into the public schools of Oswego. I have no misgivings as to the result of your experiment—if that can be called an experiment which has been so long, and so widely, and so successfully done elsewhere.

I have in various ways—in my report to the Board and Commissioners of Common Schools in Conn. in 1840—in the Connecticut Common School Journal—in my volume on Normal Schools in England—in my National Education in Europe, and in the American Journal of Education—in my volume on Pestalozzi and Pestalozzianism—and in my Papers for the Teacher, second series—by repetition of the same ideas, principles and methods successfully applied by the Home and Colonial Infant and Juvenile School Society in London—tried to make them known and living realities in our own school-rooms.

Your way of indoctrinating teachers and training them to the methods, is the best way, and I should be very glad to witness



your exercises; but my engagements for the month will prevent. I shall be happy to help give circulation to an account of your doings, and to receive your reports.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY BARNARD.

To E. A. Sheldon, Esq.

Boston, Feb. 6, 1862.

RICHARD OLIPHANT, Esq.—MY DEAR SIR—I duly received your circular, dated Dec. 2, 1861, containing an invitation from the Board of Education of the city of Oswego to several educational gentlemen, myself among the number, to attend an examination of the Primary Schools of your city, in reference to Object Lessons, on the 11th of this month. For this courteous invitation and for the hospitality so generously offered by your citizens, I desire to tender my sincere acknowledgements. I had hoped to be present on that interesting occasion, but I now find myself compelled, on account of illness, to forego the pleasure I had anticipated.

I entertain a high appreciation of the value of the Pestalozzian principles of Primary education which have been so successfully introduced into the schools of your city from the famous Training School in London, by your efficient Superintendent, Mr. E. A. Sheldon. I regard the proposed exhibition in Oswego as highly important, inasmuch as it will doubtless afford a better opportunity than has ever hitherto been enjoyed in this country, of witnessing the results of instruction on the Pestalozzian plan of developing the faculties by means of lessons on objects, animals, plants, form, size, number, color, place and drawing, together with various physical exercises. I shall look for the report of the able Committee on the subject with much interest. This movement will also be useful in directing the attention of educators more especially to the defects of Primary education, which are more grave, more numerous, and more difficult to remedy, than those of any other department.

I sympathize with those who are endeavoring to diffuse more just views among the people respecting the nature and objects of elementary education, and I would give them my co-operation and support. Still I feel that the greatest instrumentality for the improvement of Primary education, and that on which we must mainly rely, is the professional training of teachers. Our theories may be sound, but they cannot work out themselves. The Pestalozzian prin-

ciples have long been familiar to the leading educators in this country and yet they have made little progress in our Primary schools, for the want of teachers competent to apply them in practice. Not but that the teachers are well educated; but they have not had the advantages of a professional training school, so that they undertake their work with every preparation but that most of all needed.

It is upwards of thirty years since efforts were made to engraft the Pestalozzian principles upon the Boston system of Primary instruction. Josiah Holbrook, A. B. Alcott, Prof. William Russell, Joseph Ingraham, and others, labored earnestly in the cause. In the "Journal of Education," edited by Prof. Russell and published in Boston in 1829, we find some of the ablest articles on the subject. Holbrook's apparatus, and specimens of natural history were placed in some of our Primary schools, and indeed, at that time, and for a considerable period afterwards, a *cabinet* was considered an indispensable part of a Primary school apparatus. But after a time the Object Teaching died out, because the *teachers were not trained in the system*. In our recent efforts to revive the system to some extent, I find where the teacher is not interested in it, the results are far from satisfactory. But the same is true, indeed, with every branch.

With the best wishes for the success of your exhibition, I am,  
sir,

Yours most truly,

JOHN D. PHILBRICK.

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During the past year, hundreds of letters have been received, from every portion of the country, many of them of the most flattering character, showing a deep interest in these methods of instruction. It is evidently taking a deep hold of the educational mind of this country, and it can but exert a powerful influence in reforming our methods of teaching. It needs but to be understood to be appreciated and adopted.

We may feel that we have cause for congratulations that these methods have been so thoroughly embodied into our own schools. Their effect is of the most marked and happy character. It seems to awaken every sense, and every faculty of the child. Perception is quickened, and observation is awakened and rendered accurate. Language and the moral sense are carefully and admirably cultivated. We have never seen any course pursued with little children

which seems so thoroughly and completely to educate the *whole being*, including the *physical*, the *intellectual* and the *moral*. Although we are happy in the conviction that much has been accomplished during the past two or three years in the way of introducing improved methods of teaching into our primary schools, yet we are far from supposing that all has been accomplished. We feel, in fact, that only a *beginning* has been made—a *foundation begun*, on which a superstructure is to be reared. These methods are yet to be carried up, and as it were, “dovetailed” into the various subjects of study in the higher grades. This will require time. It must grow out of further observation and experience. It is proposed at the commencement of the next term to make a beginning in this direction with the C. classes, junior, for which see course of study in appendix. While, then, much has already been accomplished, much remains yet to be done, and our aim and purpose must ever be “*onward and upward.*”

W. D. SMITH,

E. A. Sheldon, Sec’y.

President.

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The result of this educational meeting was most satisfactory, and gave a decided impetus to the movement. From this moment its success was assured, and it soon became famous. Educational men from all parts of the country were drawn to Oswego to see its workings.

*Extracts from Twelfth Annual Report of Board of Education,  
Oswego, N. Y., 1865.*

Moses T. Brown, Esq., at that time the Superintendent of Public Schools of the city of Toledo, who spent several days in our schools, having visited the schools of the leading cities of the country, including those of New England, says in his annual report for 1861: “The best primary schools I have yet seen in this country are those of Oswego, N. Y. I did not notice a single instance of that listlessness and stupefaction which is inseparable from our systems of rote teaching. There was a constant activity on the part of the teachers; the recitations were short, the longest being twenty minutes. Each pupil seemed interested, every eye flashed with delight, each little face was radiant, the movements were elastic. There were no dull, heavy faces, each pupil seemed thoroughly awake. Was it not because the teaching was sensible and natural, as well as philosophical?”

Another visitor says: "Since I visited your city I have visited nearly all the schools of any note in Canada West, Western New York and Ohio, and I must still hold my first impression, that none are equal to those of Oswego in all the various departments of instruction."

Of such letters as these we had a constant inpouring during these years, from all directions.

There now sprang up a demand for teachers trained in the new methods, and we began to feel the loss of teachers drawn off to other localities. In this way, it soon became apparent that we were training teachers for other localities as well as our own.

Before Miss Jones left, arrangements were made with her for such notes and manuscript as she might have in her possession, and with her aid and that of Hermann Krusi, who came to help in our work at this time, the "Manual of Elementary Instruction" was issued, which was designed as a guide to teachers who might desire to work out these plans. The "Lessons on Objects" soon followed. About the same time, too, appeared "Calkins' Object Lessons." While bringing out this book Mr. Calkins spent a few weeks in Oswego, observing our work. These three books constituted, at that time, the only literature on this subject, and had quite an extensive sale. They did much toward forwarding the movement.

## CHAPTER XXVI

RECOGNITION AS A STATE INSTITUTION (1863)

*and*

ACQUIREMENT OF NEW BUILDING (1866)

ON THE retirement of Miss Jones, Miss A. P. Funnelle, the present principal of our Kindergarten Training Department, was employed to assist as critic and method teacher. We were now fully launched on the second year of our work.\*

The school was at this time transferred from the Fourth Street School, on the west side of the river, to the Fourth Ward School, on East Fourth Street. This was a much larger building, with much more ample accommodations in every way. The school of practice embraced all the classes of the primary school which occupied the first floor. The training class was divided into two sections. One section received instruction in the methods, while the other was engaged in the teaching of the school of practice. With this arrangement the sections alternated morning and afternoon in recitation and teaching.

The faculty, as spread out on paper, looks more formidable than it really was. The entire time of all these teachers was by no means given to the training class. The principal was, at the same time, superintendent of the

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\*For a full report of the faculty of the school and other items of interest see the Tenth Annual Report of the Board of Education for the year ending March 31, 1863.

public schools. Mr. Krusi taught French and drawing in the High school. Mr. Weller was principal of a Senior school. Mrs. Smith was a teacher in the Senior department of the school that occupied the same building with the training class. Miss Seaver also held a position in the same school. Only Miss Funnelle gave her entire time to the class. The rest of us gave instruction at stated hours along the lines indicated. The recitations were arranged to suit the convenience of all parties, and so as not to interfere with other duties. To each room in the school of practice was assigned a permanent teacher, and those in training came in and taught under the criticism of these teachers and Miss Funnelle, who had general supervision of the whole.

At that early day we called the schools of practice "model" schools, as each class had its permanent teacher, selected with reference to her superior ability as teacher of a class given her. The term was more appropriate than at a later date, when all the teaching was done by the pupils in training. At that time it was a school both of observation and of practice in teaching.

It was during this second year of the existence of the training school that application was made to the Legislature for money to aid in the support of the school. In February, 1863, an appropriation of \$3,000 was made, subject to certain conditions as to buildings and attendance. Owing to some defect in the working of the law, no benefit was realized from the appropriation during this year. During the following year the law was amended, and on May 5, 1865, \$2,128.50 were realized, and on March 31,

1866, \$1,781.67 were received.\* To the extent indicated by this act the school was now recognized as a State institution, subject to the supervision of the State Superintendent.

In 1865 the law making appropriations to the school and affecting the reception of pupils and the general management of the school was so amended as to make an appropriation of \$6,000 for the school untrammelled by the conditions of attendance which seriously embarrassed the previous appropriation, but conditioned on the provision of suitable buildings and grounds for the school by the city of Oswego. On the passage of this act, meetings of citizens were called to consult as to the course to pursue in order to comply with the provisions of this act.

A committee of citizens was appointed to cooperate with the Board of Education, and the decision was reached to purchase what is known as the U. S. Hotel property, making such improvements and enlargements as might be found necessary for the accommodation of the school.

The purchase was accordingly made, exchanging in part payment a lot purchased for school purposes on West Fourth Street. The balance paid for the hotel property was \$7,500. The contract price for repairing and enlarging the building was \$7,750, making the entire cost of the property \$15,250. To this must be added for furniture and all necessary changes and fittings, \$15,750; making the entire cost of the building to the city \$31,000.

The training school was transferred to the new building on February 28, 1866. The public school took possession at the same time, which was to constitute the school of

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\*A copy of the first act may be found on page 106 of the Annual Report of the Board of Education for the year ending March 31, 1863.

practice and model schools. Provision was made for two model schools as well as for the school of practice. One of the model schools was made up of children from different grades to represent an ungraded school, and the other was a single grade to represent a graded school. These were strictly schools of observation and were taught only by paid teachers. To these, pupils in training went to observe the best methods of teaching and managing ordinary schools. The idea was a good one, but at a later day these departments were crowded out for want of room.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### STRUGGLE AND VICTORY

THIS movement for the progress of educational reforms and the establishment of a Normal School on a new basis was not an easy-going one. It did not move of its own accord. As I was on my way to Albany to see what could be done to the end of having our little training school incorporated as a State Normal School, my old friend, Mr. Hamilton, who did not at the outset sympathize with me in my educational ideas and plans, met me on the crosswalk down town, and inquired where I was going with my grip-sack. I frankly told him. He replied: "We do not need any more normal schools; we have enough now." (We then had but one, the Albany school.) Being of a different mind, I was not deterred from my purposes. At Albany, I found Hon. A. C. Mattoon in the Assembly and Hon. Cheney Ames in the Senate. They most cordially co-operated with me in my plans, and practically relieved me of any further effort. Hon. V. M. Rice, the State Superintendent, was also in sympathy with me in our methods and our movement, and rendered us essential service by recommending and encouraging our plans. These were strong forces and enabled us easily to secure all that we asked.

For many years we had strong men and warm friends in both branches of the Legislature; such men as D. C. Littlejohn, D. G. Fort, Benjamin Doolittle, George B. Sloan—all

able men, with a strong influence in the Legislature, and always able to secure for the Oswego school all necessary appropriations. To these men the school is greatly indebted for its success. Without them, in fact, nothing could have been accomplished. Even to this day, if we want anything of the Legislature, we depend on the influence of Mr. Sloan to secure it for us.

The strongest opposition the school had to meet was from the teachers and educational people. As I have already intimated, Mr. Hamilton, principal of the High School, was not in sympathy with my ideas at the beginning, although at a later date he became, as Superintendent, a hearty co-worker.

Other prominent teachers manifested no very enthusiastic interest in my work of reform, but so far as I approved of them as teachers of commendable ability, I assigned them work, and they all became warm friends and able workers. All that was necessary was to understand the movement, to approve it. In this way I carried with me my entire corps of teachers.

The most active opposition to the movement sprang up in the State and National Educational Conventions. The first attack was made by Dr. Wilbur, Superintendent of the State Asylum for Imbeciles at Syracuse, N. Y. It was at the New York State Teachers' Association held at Rochester, N. Y., in the year 1862. At that meeting, Dr. Wilbur made a virulent attack on the Oswego methods. It was characterized more by ridicule than by argument. At the close of his address a committee was appointed to answer his address at the next meeting, which was held at Troy,

N. Y. As chairman of this committee, I framed the answer. This led to a very full discussion of the subject.

Prominent among those who spoke against the movement was D. M. MacVicar, at that time principal of the Academy at Brockport, N. Y. He was an able man and a vigorous speaker. At the time I reckoned him among the strongest opponents that put in an appearance. The next I heard of him, he wrote to know if I could send him two teachers to take charge of a City Training School in Leavenworth, Kansas. He had been elected superintendent of the public schools there, and wanted to start a training school after the Oswego plan, for training the teachers of that city. I sent him the teachers as he requested, who organized the school and remained with him until his resignation. He resigned to organize a Normal School at Potsdam, in the year 1869.

At that time he came to Oswego and selected three teachers to go with him to Potsdam and aid in the opening of that school. Meanwhile we made no allusion to his attitude toward my paper at Troy, and it was not till some years afterwards that he said to me: "I suppose that you must realize that I have changed my coat." I replied that I supposed that something had happened, as he seemed to have changed attitude toward the Oswego school. He became one of the strongest advocates of objective and Pestalozzian principles in the country. Since that time he has written an admirable book embodying these principles.

The second attack\* on the Oswego movement was made by Dr. Wilbur before the National Educational Convention held at Ogdensburg, N. Y., in 1864. At that meeting a

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\*"Oswego System of Instruction." Published in Barnard's Journal, 1865.

committee was appointed composed of some of the most prominent educational men in the country, with Professor Greene, of Brown University, as chairman, to report on the subject.

Professor Greene came to Oswego and spent several days in a careful examination into the practical working of the Oswego system and presented his report at the next meeting of the N. E. A. at Harrisburg, Pa. Several thousand copies of this able report were ordered printed and circulated throughout the country. At this same meeting some lessons were given illustrative of the methods pursued in the Oswego schools.

This report and the emphatic action of the N. E. A. effectually silenced all further public opposition in the educational conventions. To say that we had no further opposition to meet would not be true. That, indeed, will probably never come true. "Old fogies," they say, never die. There is, doubtless, an endless line of succession. We shall always have them present with us. For the most part the opposition that has manifested itself has grown out of ignorance and prejudice—ignorance of the true character of the movement, and prejudice that is sure to arrive when old customs and habits are invaded. The new movement was quite revolutionary in its character. The ordinary processes of education were reversed. From the old methods—of words first and ideas afterwards—to the new—ideas first, words afterwards—the change in the character of school work was a marked one.

For a time little local opposition manifested itself. The School Board seconded all my efforts most cordially. They even passed a resolution giving me authority, *carte blanche*,

to purchase any material, books, pictures, or anything that might be necessary to aid me in my work. I could not possibly have had more cordial support than was given me by the Board, the teachers, and the citizens, for the most part.

In September, 1869, I resigned my position as Secretary of the Board of Education, which for several years I had held conjointly with the principalship of the training school. About this time, or soon after, the character of the Board began to change. By a division of the city into eight wards instead of four, the number of members of the Board was increased from eight to sixteen. This change brought into the Board a number of ignorant ward politicians, who knew little of educational movements and cared less. They cared more to get their axes ground than to improve the schools or methods of teaching. During my administration I had introduced Guyot's Geographies into the public schools—a series of books very far in advance of anything that had at that time been published. Soon after my retirement, there came into the Board, a man who was distantly related to Miss Cornell, the author of Cornell's Geography—a comparatively puerile book, which could in no way be compared with Guyot's for scientific construction and arrangement of matter. This man, Wallace, conceived the idea of introducing Cornell, and putting out Guyot. In this movement he had, of course, the support of the publishers of Cornell's, which meant a good deal, as they had one of the strongest publishing houses in the State. When I found out what was going on, I determined to do what I could to stop the movement. I went before the Board, labored with the individual members, and exerted all the personal influence I could command to prevent the change.

Mrs. Smith, one of my teachers who had worked out methods of teaching geography on Pestalozzian principles, whose manuscript had been accepted by the publishers of Guyot for the first book of the series, and who had worked with Guyot from the beginning in making his book, came before the Board to explain its merits. But all to no purpose—the membership of this Board was not so constructed as to be able to appreciate the value of educational principles. This was most amusingly manifested in the final resolution presented by Mr. Wallace, a man, who, as my friend Johonot aptly put it, “Could swear better than he could spell his oaths.” This was a remarkable resolution adopted by the Board as the summing up of the whole business: “Resolved, that Cornell’s Primary Geography be substituted for Object Teaching in the public schools of Oswego.” This ended all argument, but not the animus that had been aroused by my opposition to the proposed action of the Board. The discussion got into the daily papers. Two out of three of these papers opened fire on me, and at the end pronounced me dead and buried, and “Object Teaching” with me, beyond all possibility of resurrection. But you know, truth (crushed to earth) will rise again, and the movement has gone on until it has filled the whole land in spite of the resolutions of the City Board of Education and the funeral obsequies by the city papers. This was the last serious local fight against the new educational movement. Of course, individuals now and then, from that time to this, raise a taunting cry against the new fads, but on the whole, the ranks of the new education have grown greater and its enemies fewer, and we have no more serious contests to make.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### REPUTATION AND INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOL

MANY representative educators from different parts of the country, and teachers from every grade were from time to time visitors to the training school and the public schools. Many of the most competent graduates of the school had been invited to different cities to organize city training schools on the plan of the Oswego Training School, and to State Normal schools to organize training departments in connection with schools of practice.

Miss Jennie H. Stickney, who was a graduate of the Salem (Mass.) State Normal School before she came to Oswego, and who had already gained some reputation as a teacher, went to Boston, on the strength of my advice, as a sort of pioneer missionary for the new methods. She was at that time teaching in one of the primary schools of Oswego on a salary of three hundred dollars per annum. She was offered five hundred dollars to go to some town in the West, and at the same time a friend of mine, a Mr. Clark, who had been to Oswego to see our work and believed in it, being principal of one of the grammar schools of Boston, and desiring to introduce something of our new methods into his school, offered Miss Stickney, whom I had recommended to him, three hundred dollars as a primary teacher in his school. Miss Stickney came to me for

advice as to which position she had better accept—the one West at five hundred dollars or the one in Boston at three hundred dollars. I advised her to accept the latter. I said: “I want you to go to Boston to do missionary work.” She took my advice and went.

The Boston teachers had agreed among themselves that they would not speak to Miss Stickney nor visit her room. By the end of the year, however, they had quite forgotten their prejudices and united in making her a handsome present, on which occasion they were frank enough to tell her all about their agreement to ignore her.

For the next year Mr. Clark arranged to have Miss Stickney take charge of a primary school in a separate building, but in his district, at a salary of five hundred dollars. It was while she was in this building that I visited Boston. I went to the superintendent and asked him to direct me to the best primary school in Boston. He sent me over into South Boston. On my way I stopped at Miss Stickney’s school and took her along with me.

We found in this model school of Boston from fifty to seventy-five children. The quietness of the room was almost oppressive. The ticking of the clock was very observable—the sound of a dropping pin would have been equally observable. A class standing on the floor had the attitude of so many soldiers. They stood in a perfectly straight line. They held their books equidistant from their noses. When they moved, they moved as one body. Everything was in military order and precision. The teacher showed very marked magnetic power. She could do what she pleased with the children. As we passed out, Miss Stickney asked my opinion of the school. “It is the most



perfect automaton school I ever saw. Everything went on like a piece of clockwork—as if moved by some automatic power,” I answered. She replied, “This is the ideal school in Boston. This is their idea of good order, and they will not tolerate me.” I said, “I think there must be some good sense in Boston—some who will appreciate the difference between your school and this. You hold on, and I am sure you will come out all right.”

In Miss Stickney’s school there was the hum of activity. All were busy and interested in their work. There was no idleness, interference, mischief or disorder of any kind growing out of a lack of interest. All were busy at their legitimate work. It was a school in every way to be commended, and I felt sure that it would be appreciated, as the sequel proved it was.

Soon after my return to Oswego, I received a letter from a gentleman connected with the Boston Board of Education, asking what I thought of Miss Stickney’s qualifications to organize and conduct a training school for the purpose of training teachers for the Boston public schools. I did not hesitate to recommend her for the undertaking. Her appointment followed soon after. Her salary was advanced to fifteen hundred dollars. She was given a leave of absence to come to Oswego to make the necessary preparations for opening the school, and in September, 1864, the Boston Training School was opened with Miss Stickney at its head. She took with her Miss Sarah D. Duganne, a recent graduate of the school, who acted as her assistant for many years, and at a later period went to Cincinnati to take charge of a training school in that city. The Boston Training School grew into the Boston Normal School, with

Dr. Larkin Dunton at its head and Miss Stickney as assistant.

Miss Stickney gives a very pleasant account of the incident that led to her appointment in the training school. She says, an old gray-haired gentleman, with a gold-headed cane and his hat in hand, entered her room one day. She asked him to be seated. He declined, saying that he could stop but a moment, and asked her not to be interrupted but to go on with her usual work. He stood some time and then sat. He stayed on until time for dismissal, when Miss Stickney said: "It is now time to close our school; can I do anything more for you?" He requested her to go on with some other exercises which he indicated. She did as he requested and she continued her session a half-hour beyond the usual time for dismissal. He very politely thanked her and left.

This gentleman proved to be a member of the Board of Education and a visitor for the district. He was so much pleased with what he saw in this school that he related it to the Board at their next meeting, and recommended that they establish a training school for the training of the Boston teachers, and put Miss Stickney at the head of it. This was the gentleman who wrote me inquiring into the fitness of Miss Stickney for the position. In his letter he said he was fully satisfied of her ability to take the position, but he wrote for the purpose of having his opinion confirmed before the Board of Education.

This training school had an important influence on the educational methods of Boston and vicinity. The teacher of the South Boston model primary school and its model teacher, Boston's ideal, I have never heard from.

As already stated, when Miss Jones left, Miss Funnelle was appointed to give instruction in methods and had general supervision of the school of practice. Before the end of the first year she was invited to take charge of the model primary department of the Albany State Normal School, at a material advance in salary, and Miss Matilda S. Cooper was appointed to fill the vacancy—a position which the latter filled for many years with distinguished success. Within a year or two Miss Funnelle was called to Indianapolis to organize a city training school, an institution that still exists and flourishes. Not very long after the establishment of this city training school, she went to the State Normal School at Terre Haute, Ind., as teacher of methods and critic in the school of practice. This position she held for many years. When she resigned, she went to Detroit to organize the city training school for that city. Later she resigned her position in Detroit and went to Johns Hopkins University for a year's study, then to Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, for one year, and finally spent one year in special kindergarten study as a preparation for her present position as principal of the Kindergarten Training Department in our Normal School. I consider her the best teacher in the country for the position she occupies. She is made such by her original qualities of heart and head, her long experience in training teachers, and her educational qualifications.

Miss Delia A. Lathrop was a graduate of the Albany State Normal School and had charge of one class in Senior School No. 1 in Oswego at the time Miss Jones was here. At first she did not quite know what to make of the new movement and stood aloof. As she saw its growth and in-

creasing popularity, she decided to make herself familiar with its principles and methods, and entered the training class as a pupil. She was of a strong character and became a warm and able advocate of the new methods. After graduation she was for a year or two principal of the Worcester City Training School and later principal of the Cincinnati Training School, which she organized, and conducted with distinguished ability for nine years until called to preside over the household of Prof. Wm. G. Williams, of Delaware, Ohio.

Miss Mary V. Lee, a graduate of the New Britain, Ct., Normal School, came to us in 1862, a chosen delegate from her State. On her graduation from our method course, the same year, she, with Mrs. Mary A. McGonegal, went to Davenport, Iowa, to organize a city training school, an institution that is still flourishing so far as I know. After a few years Miss Lee was invited to the State Normal School at Winona, Minn., while Mrs. McGonegal returned to become State Superintendent of Missions. Miss Lee proved herself a very strong, capable teacher and made for herself an enviable reputation. She has written the most sensible grammar I have yet seen published. After resigning her position at Winona, she took a medical course at the University of Michigan, that she might the better know "how to teach young women how to live." On her graduation, she came to Oswego to take charge of the department of physiology and physical culture in our Normal School—a position that she held at the time of her death.

I have spoken of a few of the early graduates who went out to organize city training schools, but I have not time to speak of all. Many city training schools were later or-

ganized by our graduates in different parts of the country, notable among them Worcester, Mass.; Portland and Lewiston, Me.; Paterson, N. J.; Dayton and Cleveland, Ohio. Our graduates also, as teachers, went into many of the Normal schools of the country. The Cook County Normal School had at first most of its teachers from our school, and when Colonel Parker went to preside over this school, he took with him Mr. and Mrs. Straight (two of our strongest teachers), and a recent graduate, Mr. George Fitz, a very promising young man who had done special work with Mr. Straight. Miss Emily J. Rice, of the class of '72, had gone there soon after her graduation, and has remained in the school through all the changes in its administration. She has been one of Colonel Parker's most valued helpers in modifying and in carrying out his ideas; and he has declared her "one of the best teachers of history and literature in the country."

In 1866-67 six additional state normal and training schools were established in New York State, all on the general plan of the Oswego school, only that the courses of study were considerably enlarged. The year of professional work and the school of practice were the same. The principal change was the addition of the languages, a change against which the Oswego school always remonstrated, but as the Superintendent desired that all the new schools should have the same curriculum, no choice was left to us but to work with the other schools.

The Oswego school was organized on a different plan from any other normal school in the country, in that it had a full year of professional work with a large school of practice sufficient to give an opportunity for all the mem-

bers of the graduating class to teach at least five months under criticism. A few other normal schools had what they called model schools, but they were largely schools for observation, and very little actual teaching under criticism was done. The professional character of the school and its stand for Pestalozzian principles and the new education, were its distinguishing characteristics; and upon these its reputation was won.

As the new schools in the State were organized, graduates of our school were invited to teach in various departments, but especially in those of method and criticism.

From what I have said it will be seen that the Oswego school has had an important influence on the normal school system of this and other States. This influence was particularly felt in western and southwestern States, notably in Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota and California.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### SPECIAL FEATURES IN ORGANIZATION

IN THE organization of the school we were fortunate both in the selection of the Faculty, and in the Local Board.

In Prof. I. B. Poucher we had not only a popular and able teacher of mathematics, but a wise counselor, a capable business man, one who made himself useful in many ways. At the time of this writing, 1897, he is still at his post, doing his work as well as ever.\*

Miss Matilda Cooper, who had most of the professional work and taught Grammar, was a woman of remarkable power and insight into educational principles. She had also rare teaching ability. I have never seen a teacher who could accomplish so much in a given time. She made a strong impression on all her pupils.

Prof. Hermann Krusi, a Swiss, was born, as it were, in the school of Pestalozzi, his father having been associated as a teacher with Pestalozzi from the beginning and for many years. The elder Krusi later conducted a Cantonal Normal School, one of the first established in Switzerland; and here our Krusi received most of his professional training, and acquired some years of experience in the application of Pestalozzian principles in teaching. Before coming to Oswego he had been a teacher in the Home and Colonial

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\*Successor to Dr. Sheldon as Principal.—Ed.

Training College of London, and afterwards in a famous private Normal School in Massachusetts. He had also been a lecturer in teachers' institutes in that State. His subjects with us were Philosophy and History of Education, Geometry, French and German. He had a very clear insight into educational principles, knew how to analyze a subject into its simplest elements, and present it in a clear, logical way. His assistance in interpreting the application of principles to other branches than his own, was invaluable.

Dr. J. W. Armstrong, the science teacher, was a man of profound scholarship, and of extraordinary skill in the manipulation of apparatus.

Mrs. Mary Howe Smith, a graduate of the Albany Normal School, teacher of geography, was a woman of rare endowments. She had been associated with Professor Guyot in the preparation of his geographies, and her opportunities for perfecting herself in her subjects, particularly geography, had been unusual. As a teacher she had no superior. Her moral and social influence also was of a high order. These teachers were all strong in their several departments and did much to make the school both popular and useful.

The original Local Board was composed of the following gentlemen: Gilbert Mollison, Abner C. Mattoon, David Harmon, Daniel G. Fort, John K. Post, Samuel B. Johnson, Benjamin Doolittle, Theo. Irwin, Alanson S. Page, John M. Barrow, Delos Dewolf, Thomas S. Mott and Thompson Kingsford. These were all high-minded men, who had the confidence of the whole community. They were men of excellent judgment, who acted wisely in all their decisions, and did much toward putting the school on solid founda-



tion, besides affording it every facility for work. In all their actions regarding it, they sought only its highest good.

With such a Faculty and such a Board, the school could not fail to be successful. It increased rapidly in numbers and popularity, and very soon outgrew the capacity of the building for accommodating the pupils. In '78 an appropriation of \$40,000 was made, to change and enlarge the building. In 1880 an additional appropriation of \$24,625.64 was made to complete the enlargement. In '85 and '86 appropriations, amounting in the aggregate to \$9,460.97, were made to replace the old wooden wing at the northwest corner of the building with a substantial brick structure. All these enlargements and improvements went on while the school was in session, one section at a time being torn down and rebuilt. The general form of the building remains the same, but it is greatly enlarged, and its external appearance is very much changed. It is now amply sufficient to accommodate 350 pupils, as many as should be congregated in any normal school.

A distinguishing feature of our school from the beginning has lain in our constant endeavor to emphasize the purely professional side of the training, and to exclude, as far as practicable, the academic lines of work. This has led to much controversy, and occasional changes in our organization. From the first, I objected to the opening of a classical department in connection with our school. The principals and the State Superintendent disagreed with me, and no choice was left us in the matter until, during the administration of Judge Draper, in '91, consent was gained to drop out this department. Some other changes were made at

the same time. My object in dropping the classical course was to gain more time for work in other directions, that seemed to me more important to the professional character of the school. An additional year was thus gained for work in history, science, psychology and teaching, and in higher English. A year was also added for those who wished to become superior primary and kindergarten teachers. A special course was arranged for training critic and method teachers. However, as the State Superintendent and the diploma made no recognition of this course, very few ever took advantage of it, and it died a natural death.

Our primary and kindergarten course has proved both popular and useful. This is an optional three-year course leading to a State diploma. We have also a short course for training kindergartners. A large number of kindergartners have been graduated from this course and are now doing good work.

We have also a manual training course which is optional; the option being between this course and higher mathematics. Very many have elected this course and have done excellent work. Its object is to train teachers to use tools readily in the construction of such simple apparatus as may be required in science work in the lower grades. We have a shop finely equipped for this work, which is under the supervision and direction of Mr. Piez, who is remarkably competent, and has proved himself invaluable to us, in developing all kinds of manual training on sound principles and in a practical way.

Two systematic related lines of work are taken up in the school of practice, which run all through the grades from the kindergarten to the normal department. One of these

is science, and the other history and literature. Out of these two lines, which involve the thought work, grows a third, which may be termed expressive or language work. This includes all modes of expression—pantomime, symbols and signs; drawing, painting, moulding; all lines of manual work, building, architecture; music; oral and written speech—penmanship, spelling, reading, grammar, rhetoric; arithmetic and algebra.

For the work in elementary science, drawing and manual training, a laboratory has been fitted up with every possible convenience. A separate room is devoted to clay moulding, and another to moulding in geography. The outfit for all these lines of work is very complete, affording every possible facility for carrying it on.

We have laboratories in all departments of the school, well equipped and provided with every facility for thorough and efficient work in science. Our arrangements for teaching History and Literature throughout the grades, in a correlated way, are also very complete, and the work is in charge of a thoroughly competent teacher.

These are some of the things we have been able to do by giving up the classical course—work that tells, in my judgment, far more for the interest of the common schools, than the smattering of Latin, Greek, German and French, which was all we were able to give in the classical course.

We have a well equipped gymnasium. In this connection it ought to be said, with regard to exercise in a gymnasium with the apparatus found there, that the physical condition of the person should be ascertained by a competent physician, and the appropriate exercises for each individual prescribed. These should be taken under the direction of

some experienced person, who knows to what extent and how they should be employed. This means the employment of two high-salaried persons—an expense quite beyond the means of any ordinary school. This may be done in the universities, and a few highly favored institutions, but it is hardly practicable in any ordinary normal or public school.

There are improvements of an important character that it would be well for us to make later on ; but what we need now most of all is to strengthen and perfect the work we have in hand. To this I am resolved to devote what remains to me of life and strength.

## CHAPTER XXX

### ACTIVITIES OF DR. SHELDON'S LAST YEARS: 1887-1897

"AND so my father stands among his bee-hives, thinking, acting yet; and if you ask him his ideal of a future state, he will answer promptly, smiling at you with his clear and steady eyes—'Constant activity.'"—M. S. B.

During the last years of his life, especially from 1887 onward, Dr. Sheldon, on the *qui vive* to keep pace with the rapid forward movements of education all over the country, made frequent trips to other States, to visit the best schools. He attended various summer schools, to obtain the latest ideas in pedagogy; and I think he attended every N. E. A. meeting up to the time of his death, generally having some special appointment to fulfill there. It seemed as if he had begun life over again, taking hold of every new phase of educational questions with the enthusiasm of a young man.

Various projects affecting the educational welfare of the State occupied more or less of his attention throughout these last years. The cause of the unification of the educational system of New York State, for which Dr. Sheldon exerted himself with great earnestness at different times, was so important, and its history so interesting, that it will be taken up separately.

In 1888 Dr. Sheldon delivered an address on "The Intellectual Value of Manual Training," at the New York State Teachers' Association meeting at Watkins. This address which will be found in another part of this book, he repeated by special request at Colonel Parker's school, the Cook County Normal School, in Chicago, January, 1889. Colonel Parker's school was ever a source of inspiration and enthusiasm to Dr. Sheldon. There had sprung up between these two men a most intense and generous friendship. The visit to the school was an occasion of rejoicing, not only to them, but to numerous Oswego Alumni located in the vicinity of Chicago, who tendered Dr. Sheldon a reception and banquet at the Cook County

Normal—an event the memory of which will always be treasured as one of the happiest, by every one present.

Tracing events by letters at hand, we find the following:

*From letter of July 29, 1889.*

Saratoga Summer School.

“I follow up Prof. Balliet in psychology and number, and we (Miss Smith and I) meet him for an hour in the afternoon for discussions in psychology. We enjoy him very much. . . I only wish more of our teachers were here. They would find a great many new devices for their work which would be useful to them.” . . .

In 1890 Dr. Sheldon attended the N. E. A. at St. Paul, where he was honored by a charming reception and banquet, arranged by the local Oswego Alumni Association, a very large and active organization.

From 1891, we have the following:

*To Mrs. Sheldon.*

Toronto, July 15, 1891.

. . . We are located on Church Street very near all the meetings and exhibits which we are following up with great interest, giving our whole time and strength to them. We are meeting a great many people whom we already knew, and a great many more whom we now know, but did not before, and are enjoying everything very much. Last evening we went to hear Col. Parker, who was at his best and spoke to an audience of five thousand people or more, and alluded in the most flattering way to Oswego and its work. We felt very highly honored. To-day we are attending the Round Table discussions on psychological questions, where Miss Smith shows herself a peer. I am very proud of her. I find no one who understands these subjects so well. She can teach them all. We are very well indeed. . . .”

In the summer of 1893 we find him again in Chicago, to attend the Columbian Exposition, enjoying honors conferred on his school and on himself (See Hollis, p. 89) ; meeting once more an enthusiastic welcome from old pupils and friends, at a reception formally tendered by the Alumni in the New York State Building.

From 1894, we have a series of letters containing notes of a trip in the Eastern States, "to gain more wisdom." During this journey he did not allow a day to pass without dispatching a letter or a postal-card to Mrs. Sheldon. Their contents would indicate that the ways were full to overflowing.

I should like, if I might, to give here some facsimiles of Dr. Sheldon's handwriting of this period, showing how he had applied himself to the task, even at the age of seventy, of learning to use the vertical style, then just coming into vogue in the United States. He succeeded wonderfully well, too; and it must be acknowledged that the appearance and legibility of his writing were decidedly improved by the change.

In the summer of '95, Dr. Sheldon visited California for the first time, taking with him his wife and sister. The party was a notable one, Dr. Hamilton and Prof. Krusi being among the number. Many old friends and pupils were found on the Pacific Coast including his daughter, Mrs. Barnes, with her husband, both professors at Leland Stanford, Jr., University. Dr. and Mrs. Sheldon endured the fatigues of the trip splendidly, and returned home greatly enthused and refreshed.

We have to record for the spring of the next year the first break in the family circle, when the wife and mother departed, leaving a vacancy whose full depths have hardly yet been fathomed, after all these years. The blow seemed to prostrate the husband and father so completely at first that his friends believed it impossible that he could return to his work. But a strong sense of his duty to his school roused him, and all were surprised and awed to see him after the briefest respite, standing calmly before them, ready for work.

From this time, we all distinctly felt, his life was simply one of waiting, although a busy one to its close.

During the following summer he received great comfort from a complete reunion at Shady Shore of all his children with their families.

His various activities for the school and the educational system

of the State went steadily on through the year, the preparations of his autobiography, at Mrs. Barnes' earnest request, being added to his other labors.

The next summer, 1897, he must still be learning, and to this end, he attended the N. E. A. meeting at Milwaukee, and afterwards for about a week a pedagogical summer school in Chicago, enrolling himself as a pupil, in classes led by teachers far younger than himself. His sister Dorliska kept an accurate journal of this entire trip, also of the incidents following his return home, and preceding his death in the following month.

*Extracts from Dorliska E. Sheldon's Diary.*

July and August, 1897.

When brother first proposed that I should accompany him on his vacation trip, I objected, saying I preferred to remain at Shady Shore rather than go anywhere else during the summer months. He replied: "If you do not go, I shall not." Knowing as I did his anxiety to attend the meetings of the N. E. A., and also his desire to visit his daughters, Mrs. Alling in Austin, and Mrs. Howe and Mrs. Inman in Indianapolis, I decided to accompany him, and shall never regret that I did.

On the morning of July 5th we started for Milwaukee to attend the N. E. A.

We reached Milwaukee in time for a late midday dinner. I was too weary to eat, but brother went out and procured some fruit for me and then went to a restaurant for his dinner, and afterward to some of the meetings of the association. I think he did not go out in the evening. Rooms had been previously secured at the home of Mrs. Dr. Fox, 470 Jackson Street. Since his death, Mrs. Fox has written a letter, which reads in part as follows: "When I received the paper from Oswego, I immediately thought, before opening it, 'Dr. Sheldon has gone!' He seemed, when here, to have such a splendor hold on life, the distance between him and Heaven seemed so short, and he seemed so ready and prepared to go. I never had so short an acquaintance leave such pleasant recollections."

He attended the meetings of the association morning and afternoon, but I think only once in the evening. (Wednesday evening we attended a kindergarten reception in the Athenaeum.) Thurs-



day morning we went to the Exposition building to listen to several advertised addresses, but being a few moments too late for the first, we stood in the street for nearly an hour until the next speaker was announced, the crowd meanwhile going from one side of the building to another, vainly trying to obtain admittance.

We went every morning to the headquarters of the association, where he was delighted to meet many of his former pupils and educational friends. Many others would also come and introduce themselves, asking: "Is this Dr. Sheldon?" expressing a wish to shake hands with one of whom they had heard so much. The mercury was in the nineties most the time we were in Milwaukee.

Saturday morning we took the boat for Chicago, and found the lake breezes quite refreshing. We reached Mr. Alling's house in Austin just before evening. . . . On Monday morning he went with Mr. Alling to the city, and returned at evening, saying that he had enrolled himself as a pupil in a Summer School of Methods on the south side of the city. He attended afternoon sessions on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. He spent the mornings in visiting school buildings and other places of interest, and took his dinners at restaurants.

Thursday he received an invitation to join the class in an extended trip across the city on Friday afternoon. He replied that he had a sister in the city, and if she could go also he would accept, otherwise he would decline. Forthwith an invitation was sent to the sister, who accepted. We had a delightful drive up Michigan Avenue to Lincoln Park, a distance of nine miles. . . . We reached home quite weary, at 8 p.m.

The next morning (Saturday) he left the house at six o'clock, so as to reach the school in time for a morning session at eight o'clock. After the morning session he took a ride of forty-five minutes on the steam cars to Kenilworth, to take dinner with a college classmate, Mr. Henry G. Miller, returning in time to meet and visit friends whom Mrs. Alling had invited.

His daily trips to and from school, which he took alone every day but one, from the extreme western limit of the city to quite a distance on the south side, must have been quite a strain upon him. The walk from Mr. Alling's to the "elevated" station was three-quarters of a mile. At the downtown station on the "elevated" coming home, he always had to climb two long flights of stairs. The entire trip each way required an hour and a half, with fatigues.

ing changes from one car line to another. After returning home, at about five in the afternoon,, he would lie down and take a little rest. He seemed in good health and spirits, and we were all surprised at his vigor and endurance. He had a good appetite, and even complained of being hungry, a sensation which he said he had not experienced in years.

On Monday he went to Normal Park to visit Colonel Parker. On Tuesday we all went to Jackson Park for a family picnic. (We had also a family picnic the Wednesday previous at Washington Park, brother leaving us long enough to attend his school session, and returning to us.) On the way over, brother and I stopped and crossed over quite a long stretch of unoccupied lots (except as to cows) to visit the University buildings, returning by the same disagreeable path to the cable cars. . . . In the afternoon we took a carriage and drove around the deserted Columbian Exposition grounds.

The following day, July 21st, we went to Indianapolis, where we spent two weeks very quietly, neither of us being very well, the heat being excessive and debilitating, the mercury ranging from 90 to 100 degrees in the shade.

At parting he said to his little grand-daughter Frances: "You will never see your grandpa again."

On August 5th we started for home. On reaching Buffalo we were feeling so much better, we decided to stop off and go to Perry, Wyoming County, the home of our childhood. In Perry we spent a week very pleasantly, making from three to six visits daily. We also took a horse and carriage, and drove over the dear old home farm, where lingered so many loving and sacred memories, and we visited the cemetery, where we found many more names that we knew than we found among the living.

While there we visited a cousin (Mr. Merrick Sheldon) in Mt. Morris, who had been stricken with paralysis. He was otherwise well, but could neither stand nor speak. He knew us, and it was pitiful to see him struggle to speak, and then weep because he could not. On leaving the room, brother said: "Oh, I would rather die in the harness." He little realized how soon his wish was to be granted, and that he was to die in the harness all ready for another year's work. On our return from Mt. Morris we visited the high banks of Genesee River—one of the resorts of our youth.

Friends urged us to stay longer, but he said he could not, as

he had so much to do preparatory to the opening of the school, and I said: "I shall go when my brother goes."

We spent one Sabbath in Perry, and one in Warsaw, attending church morning and evening. In the church at Perry Centre—our home church—was a pastor whom we had never seen. He said to one of his parishioners: "I fell in love with Dr. Sheldon the moment he entered the church, and felt that I was not competent to preach to such a man." Monday morning we left Warsaw, a little after seven, spent most of the day in Rochester and Charlotte, and reached home at ten p.m.

The next morning (Tuesday, August 17th) brother went to the Normal building morning and afternoon, and again Wednesday morning. In the afternoon we took a family drive to Oswego Center. Thursday he went again to the Normal morning and afternoon. That evening I asked him how he was progressing with his preparatory work. He answered: "Very nicely; I think I shall come out all right. Mr. Piez has helped me so much"—a help concerning which he spoke very gratefully.

Friday brother went to his work at the Normal, morning and afternoon as usual. Before leaving in the morning, I found him winding a flannel bandage around his right wrist, which he said was rheumatic. He said his fingers had felt a little lame for several days.

Saturday, August 21st. This morning brother's wrist was very lame and painful, so that he did not go to the Normal as he could not use his hand. He walked out around the place and into the orchard for a little while. This was the last time he went out of the house. I tried several times to have him see a physician, but he would not consent until evening, when he said we might telephone to Dr. Eddy to come out if quite convenient. Dr. Eddy was out of town, but would be back at 11 p.m. I begged to have him called on his return, but brother said: "No; I do not like to trouble a physician in the night." I then prepared to sleep on the sofa near him, but he said it was entirely unnecessary, and would make him very unhappy if I did.

He passed a very restless night on account of the pain in his wrist, sitting up or reclining in his chair most of the night.

Sabbath morning we telephoned for Dr. Eddy. When he arrived he said this was a different kind of rheumatism from that which had previously troubled him. He left a prescription for

medicine to be used during the day, and an anodyne for the night. He slept soundly all night, without waking once.

Monday he did not feel so well, and the symptoms proved serious, requiring a physician's attendance again.

On Tuesday morning, brother seemed more comfortable, but not so well in the afternoon. We sent for the physician, who said he saw nothing alarming in his case. Miss Hayes and Miss O'Geran came out at his request in the afternoon. He met them in the parlor, but wished me to remain lest he might need my assistance. Brother passed a very restless night. During the night he called Charles and John, but no one heard him. Early Wednesday morning he came to the hall door and called Charles again, and I heard him and called Charles. Charles helped him dress, and he came to breakfast with us, but was obliged to leave the table before he had quite finished his meal. He has been at table with us at every meal, though we were obliged to prepare his food for him, because of his lame wrist. His appetite has been fairly good. He spoke of the kindness of everyone to him, and said he thought there was not much selfishness in the world as people generally thought.

During the forenoon (Wednesday) he undressed and went to bed, and did not sit up again, except to eat his meals which were brought to him, and he ate them sitting on the bed. He received one or two calls during the day and Mr. Looney called on business connected with the school in the evening.

Miss Horton came Tuesday (August 24th) and Wednesday to receive his dictation. On Tuesday Helen (Mrs. C. S. S.) asked him if she could not help him, and he remarked: "You will all have all you will want to do for me before you get through with this." Brother requested on Wednesday night that Charles sleep on the sofa in the next room, which he did. About midnight he called for his assistance. He said that his heart was quite weak, but that he had slept nicely up to that time. Charles lay awake for some time after this until brother went off to sleep.

Thursday morning, on going to my brother, he said he had passed a very comfortable night. I prepared his breakfast of mush and toast, and he commenced feeding himself, but soon consented to let me feed him. He then sent a message to one of his teachers to come to see him that forenoon. He complained of weakness about the heart, referred to some papers in his drawer, which he requested me "to look after when I am gone." This startled me,

and before I could frame a reply, he said: "I think I am dying; my lungs are filling up."

I said to him: "If you must leave us, do you still feel that Christ is with you?" He answered: "Yes." While Charles and Helen were looking for some restoratives, he raised his arm and drew me down gently to him, imprinting on my lips a parting kiss, the most precious kiss of all my life. On their return, they wished him to take some stimulant, but he said: "It is of no use," adding, "Charles, I am glad you are here." Referring to his private papers, he said: "I hope everything will be settled in peace." Helen said to him: "Father, you are going to be with mother and with Christ." He repeated: "Mother. . . Christ"—his last words.

He spoke of dying as though it were an every-day occurrence, and passed peacefully away at 8:30 a. m. (August 26th, 1897). His dying testimony was very brief, but his living testimonials to his love of God and humanity for a period of nearly sixty years were abundant, and his memory is blessed.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### IN MEMORIAM

FUNERAL services were held on Sunday, August 29th, 1897, at Grace Church (Second Presbyterian), Rev. David Wills, Jr., Pastor; the Mayor, Common Council, city officers, Board of Education, city teachers, and Alumni of the Normal School having been specially invited to attend.

"A vast throng representing all classes and conditions of life filled the large church, while many were unable to gain admittance. No such outpouring had been seen in Oswego for years. On the streets as the procession passed on the way to the cemetery, pedestrians paused and uncovered their heads out of respect to the departed."

Dr. Sheldon's old teacher, the Rev. C. A. Huntington, then at the age of eighty-five years, wrote, on receiving the news of Mr. Sheldon's death, to Miss Dorliska Sheldon:

Sacramento, Cal., October 7, 1897.

I have received the obituary of your good brother, and in common with his many friends far and near, "My head is turned into waters and my eyes into a fountain of tears." How could it be otherwise? He was my life-long friend, sincere, undisguised, who never in childhood or manhood missed a chance to manifest his friendship for me in some substantial way that made me know his was a real, lasting, unfailing friendship. Of course I loved him always. In childhood I loved him as an honest, dutiful, faithful child. In youth I loved him as a diligent, courageous, persevering pupil. In manhood I loved him for his broad conceptions of the great work of life, and his incomparable genius in executing that work for the achievement of its noblest ideals.

A Memorial Exercise, to which all the Alumni and others were invited, was held at the school, October 21, 1897. Addresses were made by Hon. Charles R. Skinner, State Superintendent of Public Instruction; Lewis H. Jones, A. M. (an Alumnus), then Superintendent of Schools in Cleveland, Ohio; Prof. I. B. Poucher, of the Normal School, an invaluable associate of Dr. Sheldon from the beginning; Rev. David Wills, Jr., Dr. Sheldon's pastor; and Miss Serita Stewart, then a pupil of the school.

For several years, plans were under discussion among the Alumni, for providing a suitable memorial to their beloved Principal. The first determined on, was a marble bust, to be placed in the school assembly hall. This bust was executed by Mr. Herbert Adams of Pratt Institute, the sculptor who fashioned the bronze doors of the Congressional Library in Washington. It was unveiled May 19, 1899. Addresses were made by Hon. Geo. B. Sloan and Rev. Henry W. Sherwood of Kingston, N. Y. (an Alumnus). Prof. Krusi, who had been absent from the school for twelve years, was present and added fitting remarks on the life and work of the friend with whom he had co-labored for twenty-five years.

The Alumni further planned raising a fund to establish a Sheldon scholarship in pedagogy at Cornell University, which through the generosity of an Alumna has been completed.

The most prominent memorial that has been erected to the memory of Dr. Sheldon, consists in the bronze statue that stands in the Capitol at Albany, which was unveiled on January 11th, 1900.

This statue was the contribution of the school-children and educators of New York State, "as a fitting tribute to his life-work, and also to emphasize the importance of public education as a force in the up-building of a great State." The origin of the movement to consummate such a great tribute was narrated as follows in the circular announcing the project:

"A representative gathering of New York teachers met in Syracuse, December 26, 1897, and organized by adopting the title of the Sheldon Memorial Association, and by choosing the following officers: Hon. Charles R. Skinner, president; Hon. George B. Sloan, treasurer; Henry R. Sanford, secretary."

The date set for presenting the matter to the schools was Arbor Day, May 6, 1898. 3,007 schools, numbering about 200,000 children, responded to the appeal. From their penny contributions, and the larger ones of educators, about \$3,500 was raised, of which \$3,000 was paid to the sculptor, the remainder being disbursed for incidental expenses.

The statue was executed by John Francis Brines, and at the unveiling were present U. S. Commissioner of Education W. T. Harris, Governor Theodore Roosevelt, Hon. Geo. B. Sloan, Hon. Chas. R. Skinner, Dr. I. B. Poucher, and President Milne of the Albany Norman College—all of whom made addresses. Governor Roosevelt unveiled the statue.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### FAMILY LIFE

[Notes by a Daughter of Dr. Sheldon.]

THE home relations in the Sheldon household were beautiful and had their influence on all who came in contact with them. A letter written to Mary Sheldon, in 1889, by Dr. Henry R. Stiles, an ardent historian of New England families, has this reference to them:

It seems as if God's blessing rested upon every member of your family, from the dear *pater et mater* down to the youngest duckling of the brood. I often think of you all with surprise—at the perfection of your family life—its serenity, joyfulness, usefulness. Do you really appreciate *all* your inheritance? . . ."

All who have ever attended the Oswego school, will remember the periodical gatherings of the students at Mr. Sheldon's home—in the Spring for a grand sugaring-off, and in the autumn for a harvest party, *i. e.*, a fruit feast. Of all who enjoyed them, none enjoyed these more than Mr. Sheldon himself. They were the expression of his over-flowing love to his pupils. The first sugar party is described by a participant as follows:

Mr. Sheldon had invited all the students of the school to his home to join in an old-fashioned "sugaring off" party. The entire school accepted the invitation and a large number of friends turned out to share in the fun. Mrs. Sheldon presided over the "sugaring" process and made every one feel at home and happy. The "menu" included "warm maple sugar," "maple sugar candied in snow, and maple sugar served up in every other form." The Sheldon home was thrown open to the visitors, and the grove and grounds overlooking Lake Ontario were thronged with a joyous crowd, promenading, chatting, rollicking and romping.

The orchard contained many pear-trees, bearing the finest Bartletts. When these were ripe, Mr. Sheldon always devoted the fairest of them to the entertainment of his harvest party; adding to





THE FAMILY GROUP.



the feast other fruits bought from neighboring orchards, which were for many years prolific of very choice fruit.

In the midst of these Oswego home and school attachments, Mr. Sheldon was ever turning back with undiminished affection to his old home, his parents, his sister and brother. Many letters I have found containing plans for gathering them together to be permanently with him. He always insisted, at least, on seeing them once a year, either in Perry or at Shady Shore. Summer after summer, the family of eight packed up and tripped to Perry to live on the old farm for a month or more. And the old home contained all comfortably, without any one having to camp out—so hospitably had the grandfather built. Then Mr. Sheldon was seen in his very element, returned to his favorite farm pursuits, into which he entered with his whole soul, the happiest man on the face of the earth—and the best hand in the field. His work was surely worth the board and lodging of eight people. Would that all his pupils might have had the treat sometime, of seeing the picture made by their Principal, mounted on a big load of hay, togged out in his blue overalls and big straw hat—his aureole of white hair curling out beneath, all tossed and blown, and his smiling face beaming with fun and energy.

A daughter of Mr. Sheldon writes this of the farming-out time, and incidentally of the family relationships:

We children were having just as good a time, with plenty of cousins to help us. Yet we were always glad to get back to our "dear old Lake" Ontario, with its murmurs and its thunders—last sound at night and first sound in the morning—with its world of changing color and its glorious sunsets. That lake and sky have often seemed to bear us up, away from the common world, into realms of purest aspiration. Some of us, when away from home, have been stricken with actual, serious homesickness for them. In fact, I believe those surroundings did have a tendency to make Indians of us, in more ways than one. And such a retreat was what our father especially needed, to save him from being hopelessly immersed in school cares. On the other hand, there is no doubt that his constitution was to some extent undermined by his severe struggles with snow and cold, getting back and forth during the long tedious winters; and by his daily anxiety about reaching school in time, from such a distance.

Especially after our grandfather died (in 1878) and our uncle (in 1883), I find his letters constantly urging his mother and sisters to come to him. But the three bereaved women—the widowed sister being an invalid—clung to the old home, until grandmother died (in 1884), soon after which the change was made.

These affectionate letters were numerous through many years, in spite of his multitudinous cares. I will present only a few, and you will know them all.

Oswego, N. Y., January 31, 1877.

Dear Folks at Home:—

I should like to drop in upon you to-night and shake you all by the hand and exchange the kiss of affection, but as that cannot be, I will do the next best thing, write a letter and let you know that I am thinking of you and loving you. My heart goes out to you very often, and I live over with you all your joys and sorrows, hopes and fears. I do not know of a time when my childhood has been so often up for review as during this winter. I sometimes think, as I grow older, that my old home grows dearer to me; I am sure the companions of that home do.

Oswego, April 5, 1882.

My Dear Mother:—

I send you by this mail a birthday token which you will accept from a son who loves you more and more as the years roll by. I have not many things of which to be proud, but I am proud of my mother. I am proud that she has been so good a mother; that she has done so much for her children; that she has lived so long, and has ever been and still is so cheery and happy; that she has triumphed over death and the grave, and can say to them. "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" Such an old age is indeed beautiful, and I hope you may yet live many years to enjoy it, and that your friends may enjoy it too. My last visit was a delightful one. I enjoyed it all intensely. I took no harm from the free indulgence in warm maple sugar, and the renewal of old time scenes and occupations did me all sorts of good. . . .

With much love to you all, I am your loving and admiring son,

EDWARD.

At the time of his mother's death, Mr. Sheldon went to Perry to attend the funeral, and intended then to assist in closing the home. But the emotions aroused were too much for him, and he was obliged to postpone it until fall. He then went to Perry, in the midst of a busy school-term, and gave what time he could to preparing for removal; permitting his sister to bring away many things that one less sympathetic would have insisted on leaving behind.

His sister Dorliska made her home with him from this time; as did also the invalid sister until her death in 1885.

The same intensity of family affection that went out toward the older generation, extended itself to the younger. So, all through his life, although perfectly willing to see his children go forth to work in the world, no matter how far away, he still longed for the yearly reunion, the great vacation home-gathering of the whole company of dear ones. He felt that this consummation was really worth a heavy outlay of money and time. It was one of the few things in which he indulged extravagance.

Among his children, he counted the school alumni, and in the same way he looked for their home-coming, on the occasion of the biennial meetings; when, indeed, a remarkable number of them, reciprocating the feeling, did and still do return for social enjoyment, interchange of wisdom, and fresh inspiration.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### DEVOTION TO THE OSWEGO WORK

NEARLY allied to this strong family affection, was the devotion Mr. Sheldon showed to his Oswego work. Mrs. Barnes has mentioned three very attractive offers that came to him, of positions elsewhere, during the early years of the Oswego Training School. But he felt intuitively that this work belonged peculiarly to him, as a child to a father.

His motives for refusing these offers have been made sufficiently clear; but a few extracts from letters relating to them, will bring into clearer view some other interesting features presented by these episodes.

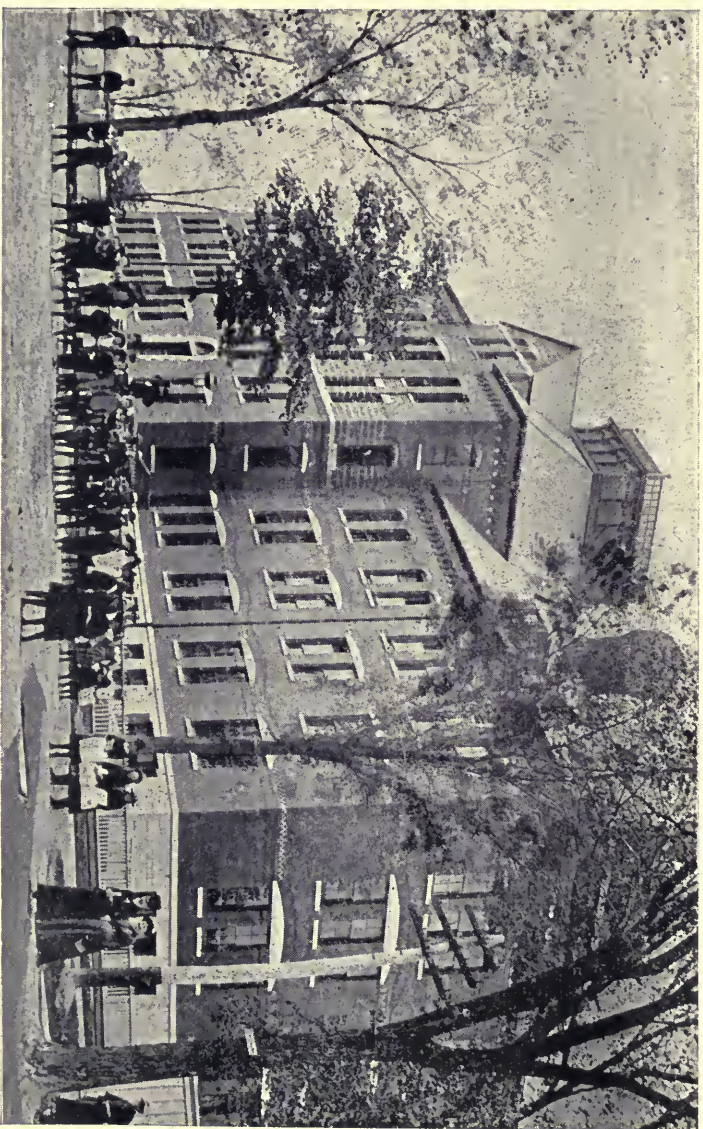
The first is given partly to call attention to a precept always earnestly upheld and followed by Mr. Sheldon, as of prime importance to success with a school or any organization. This letter was his first reply to the offer of the principalship of the Normal School at Albany.

Oswego, January 11, 1867.

Dr. Woolworth,

Dear Sir:—

Your favor of the 8th inst. is before me. The proposition it contains involves too many and too great responsibilities to allow of a hasty decision. I therefore ask a day or two in which to consider the matter and consult with friends. In the meantime I should like to know whether, in your opinion, this appointment would be favorably received by the teachers. Without their *cordial support* and *co-operation*



Oswego State Normal and Training School (Old Building).







no one can hope to sustain the reputation of the school, and make it a power for good.

Again, is there unanimity on the part of the committee? Would Mr. Rice favor the appointment? The answers to these questions may affect my decision. With the cordial sympathy and support of the committee and faculty of the school, the inducement to break away from a work to which I have been for four years wedded, and in which I still feel the deepest interest, will be very tempting. Should I decide to consider favorably such an appointment, I shall then desire, before the final acceptance of it, to visit Albany and lay before the committee and the faculty my plans for the reorganization and management of the school, and if our views should harmonize all round, then the path of duty would appear plain; but without such harmony I could not think of assuming so great a responsibility. After receiving your reply to this I hope to be able to give you my decision.

With grateful acknowledgment for the honor you have conferred upon me in suggesting my name as a candidate for this position, I remain,

Yours with the highest esteem,

E. A. SHELDON.

The succeeding correspondence indicates that the position was not refused on account of conditions in Albany:

Oswego, January 17, 1867.

S. B. Woodworth, LL.D.,

Sec'y Ed. Com., N. Y. S. N. Sch'l.

Dear Sir,

Your favor of the 15th inst. is received, for which please accept my thanks. It answers satisfactorily the questions put, and I cannot doubt that I should receive the hearty co-

operation of both teachers and school-officers in my work, should I decide to accept the position of Principal of the Normal School; but such is the state of feeling among the teachers in this school, in the Board and among the friends of education here, as to the effect upon the school of my leaving at this time, that I am led to regard it a duty to decline the flattering proposition contained in your favor of the 8th inst. There is so much that is inviting in the position you offer me, that it has not been without careful and serious consideration that I have come to this conclusion, and a sense of duty alone satisfied me that I have made a right decision.

Again thanking you for the high compliment you have paid me in presenting my name as a candidate for the Principalship of the N. Y. State Normal School, and with the hope that you may find one more worthy of the position, I remain, .

Yours very truly,

E. A. SHELDON.

The following letter inviting Mr. Sheldon to Missouri, is extremely interesting as reflecting the advancement of educational ideas in that State at the time. Without investigating the history of the matter, one can venture to affirm that this offer represents one of the first attempts to introduce pedagogics as a university branch. It certainly antedates by many years the recognition of its importance by Northern universities:

Columbia, Mo., May 10, 1867.

Prof. E. A. Sheldon,

Dear Sir:—

Mr. Phelps, of Minnesota, in a letter just received, mentioned your name in connection with the place of principal of the Normal College to form a part of this University. The University here is to consist of College of Science and Letters which has been in operation since 1843, and is now to be enlarged by the addition of professional colleges. At the last meeting of the Board of Curators, it was resolved to establish a college for the instruction of teachers. The idea is still further to be carried out by the establishment of a College of Agriculture; and to this end I think the Legislature will confer on the University an agricultural grant of 330,000 acres of land.

We wish to avoid failure, if possible, in any part of the design.

We can give salary of \$2,000 to the Principal of this College. But he must be a man of tact and talent and able to influence the public mind.

There is no separate Normal building at present. We can give one large room, with easy access to gallery of chapel, if desired that normal pupils should form part of the worshipping assembly of students at morning prayers. We could also give one recitation room. We desire to have a *model* school to consist of three grades. We have a building 30 x 60, one story, high ceiling, in which we might commence the school, which should serve as a graded school for the town, and be an exemplar for such school. This is some rods (say 30) from the University in corner of *campus*. I have been thus particular to show you the disadvantages of the *beginning* enterprise.

The rooms of any of the professors would be open to normal pupils under direction of the principal. The College is, however, to be a separate organization, except so far as it may be benefitted by community of instruction. Just as the law class will receive instruction from president in constitutional and international law.

But I cannot go into detail. Can you aid as to the man? The Board meet on the 26th of June, Commencement day; we ought really to have a man with us at that time, who could at once give direction as to altering and repairing rooms and procuring furniture. The Board would require testimonials. The Normal School will open third Monday of September.

I need not say a word of Missouri or of the importance of the object.

Columbia is a town of 2,000 inhabitants, has two female colleges in good condition. Railroad to reach it from North Missouri road in July next. The society is good.

I have until recently been connected with State University of Wisconsin, at Madison, where my family still is. Would you be inclined to an enterprise of this kind? Can you name a good man?

Some papers would be required. Please send me any documents in regard to your school.

What is the pay of your teachers, male and female?

Yours truly,

DANIEL READ.

It seems appropriate here to refer to an offer made to Horace Mann in 1839, of the Presidency of a university in Missouri, at a salary of \$3,000, *plus* elegant house, gardens, etc. His emphatic rejection of this offer, on account of his devotion to the great task upon which he had just entered, altho' with the pitiful salary of only \$1,500, is exactly on a par with Mr. Sheldon's decision. I mention this also to indicate the progressiveness of the educational authorities of Missouri, in seeking to attract to its schools the most advanced of Eastern educators.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### RELATIONS WITH COLLEAGUES

THE harmonious relations on which Mr. Sheldon insisted, really existed between him and his colleagues, in the school, and in the State. This fact cannot be better realized than by reference to a few documents that owed their origin to the period of his nervous prostration, to which M. S. B. has referred:

"It would not be in accordance with Father's disposition to dwell on this period in detail. He was heartily ashamed of it, and of all smaller attacks of illness to which he ever had to succumb. The latter were few indeed, owing largely to his temperate, prudent way of living. On this occasion, he felt that he had rashly *dissipated in work*, that he himself was to blame, and he severely disapproved of this type of foolishness. Although abundant material is at hand for reproducing a detailed history of his desperate struggle with a disheartening form of nervous exhaustion, it seems best to pass it by, and to present only one phase of the period—a phase that gave him and his friends great comfort at the time, and also in retrospect."

Signs of this break-down first became serious in the summer of 1879. Before the end of the next school term, Mr. Sheldon was obliged to leave school and home, in order to try medical treatment where it seemed that he might soonest obtain relief—with Dr. Brooks, in Providence, R. I. He had hoped to resume his duties at the opening of the following term. Events proved that he must remain longer in Providence. The following letter and resolutions bring out my point.

*Oswego Normal School Faculty to E. A. S.*

Oswego, Jan. 21, 1880.

Prof. E. A. Sheldon,

Dear Friend:

We, your assistants and co-workers, desire to report to you that the school is moving on in an orderly and satisfactory manner. Each

of us is endeavoring to develop and to use a third eye by means of which we can observe any departure from your standard of good discipline. Thus far we have been successful.

Arrangements for our closing exercises are progressing well. We individually and collectively wish to express the hope that you will feel at perfect liberty to remain in Providence during Commencement. You have "brought us up" so well that we can attend to all Commencement labors without undue tax upon any of us.

We have faith in your present treatment and wish you to continue it steadily without that retardation which would necessarily follow a journey here and attention to school matters. We feel that we cannot too strongly urge and entreat you to avoid all things that may hinder your perfect restoration to health and to labor among us.

With most earnest faith, hope and prayers for your speedy recovery, we remain,

Yours faithfully,

I. B. POUCHER,

H. KRUSI,  
H. H. STRAIGHT,  
MARY DAVIS MOORE,  
MARY V. LEE,  
M. S. COOPER,  
ORDIE A. LESTER,

JULIET A. COOK,  
M. W. MORLEY,  
GEORGIE A. TIMERSON,  
SARAH J. WALTER,  
ROSE WHITNEY,  
ELIOT M. CHURCHILL.

*State Normal School Principals to President Oswego Normal School  
Local Board.*

Normal School,  
Buffalo, N. Y., Feb. 10, 1880.

Gilbert Mollison, Esq.,  
President Local Board.

Sir:—

At the meeting of Normal School Principals held in October, much concern was manifested in reference to Prof. Sheldon's health. He, at that time, expressed a determination to try what effect a partial release from work might have, and if he received no great benefit, to resign his Principalship altogether. We all felt, and do still feel, that the Norman School work in the State is so much indebted to him, and we all esteem him so highly both for what he is and for what he had done, that we are unwilling to part with him while there is a chance of his recovering so far as to be able to resume his duties. In the name of the Principals, therefore, and at their request, I write to say, that we earnestly hope that Prof. Sheldon may have leave of absence till his health is restored, and that in case he should need it, be *prohibited* from all work in school till that end is secured.

This is not written with any thought of interfering in any way in the affairs of the Oswego Local Board, or because we feel it

necessary to make any suggestions on a point likely otherwise to be overlooked, but only to add our earnest testimony to this worth as a man and teacher, and to express our hope that every effort will be made to retain him in the Normal School.

In behalf of the Principals of the Brockport, Buffalo, Cortland, Geneseo, Fredonia and Potsdam Normal Schools.

I am obt. servant,

HENRY B. BUCKHAM.

*Resolutions of Oswego Normal School Faculty.*

Meeting of the faculty of the Oswego Normal and Training School, assembled at the office, Feb. 14, 1880.

The following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

*Whereas*, After fourteen years of superintendence of the Oswego Normal and Training School, preceded by twelve years of arduous duties as Superintendent of the Schools of Oswego City, the health of our beloved Principal, Mr. E. A. Sheldon, has become seriously impaired, and

*Whereas*, by a period of rest, we believe he may be restored to health and usefulness among us, therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the faculty of the Normal School, respectfully petition the Local Board to grant Mr. Sheldon, a furlough, under full pay, to September. 1, 1880.

*Resolved*, That during Mr. Sheldon's absence from school, we respectfully ask that Mr. I. B. Poucher be appointed to act as Principal of the Normal School without additional compensation.

*Resolved*, That the faculty, with the assistance of Mr. Sheldon's daughters, can, and are willing to perform all duties connected with the school.

I. B. POUCHER,  
Chairman.

Ordie A. Lester,  
Sec'y *pro tem*.

*Oswego Normal School Faculty to E. A. S.*

Oswego, Feb. 16, 1880.

Our Respected Principal,—

It seems meet to us, your associate teachers, to express to you our unqualified dissent to that part of our interview on Saturday, in which you promised to remunerate the teachers who performed your duties. This matter was fully discussed in the faculty meeting and the unanimous conclusion arrived at is, that not a farthing of your salary will be received by any one of us, in discharge of extra duties as long as we are able to perform them.

We are all too mindful of the many extra duties you have performed in former years, to consider this anything but an act of justice. If by giving rest to your overtaxed system you are again

restored to health and thus become able to discharge your duties, your fellow-teachers will feel themselves not only abundantly but richly rewarded for past labors as well as future toils and responsibilities.

Yours respectfully,

ORDIE A. LESTER,  
Sec'y *pro tem.*

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*Message to Mr. Sheldon from Alumni, at Their Meeting in Oswego, 1880.*

Oswego, N. Y., July 7, 1880.

Mr. E. A. Sheldon:

Your graduated boys and girls send warmest greeting, heartily wishing that your restored health and your early return to the halls so lonesome without you and to the work that needs your prudent direction.

ALUMNI OF OSWEGO NORMAL SCHOOL.

The magnanimous spirit displayed by the members of the Faculty reflects upon their own characters in a way that needs no additional eulogium.

In the fall of 1880, Mr. Sheldon was so far restored that he was able to resume his work, with a remittance of part of his duties to others.

Mr. Sheldon's conviction of the importance of establishing and maintaining harmonious relations with all his co-workers, is manifested in various passages of this biography. He was peculiarly successful in securing such harmony with those above him in official position, as well as with his executive inferiors. It was a remarkable record that he made, throughout the successive changes of administration in the State Superintendency: all the incumbents falling in line to aid him in his plans,—some far more zealously than others, of course, according to their own natural inclination and ability. In one case, the Superintendent did not share Mr. Sheldon's enthusiasm for a certain object, and failed to support him there; but this did not mar their harmonious relations in other regards, and they were always warm friends and mutual admirers, hearty co-workers for good. This Superintendent on retiring, wrote:

Albany, N. Y., March 30, 1892.

Dr. E. A. Sheldon,  
Oswego, N. Y.

My dear Sir:

As I am about to retire from the office of State Superintendent, I write to express my thanks to you for the cordial and courteous support which I have at all times received from your hand. It has been a great satisfaction to me that one so experienced in school affairs, and of such high standing in the educational world, should be disposed to support my administration as heartily as you have. I hope that you may be spared yet many years to continue the great work which you have so efficiently and successfully carried on, and I hope also that the severance of official relations will not terminate our pleasant acquaintance. It shall be my effort to keep in touch with you in the future.

In the meantime, rest assured of my sincere appreciation of your thoughtful consideration of me during the last six years, and of my best wishes for your future.

I am,

Very sincerely yours,

A. S. DRAPER.

The rest of the story of Dr. Sheldon and Dr. Draper will be saved for a later chapter.



## CHAPTER XXXV

### DR. SHELDON'S PERSONALITY AS TEACHER AND FRIEND

[Extracts from Letters and Editorial.]

REMEMBERING what is in the school, what it has cost, I think we must love and guard it always.

I wanted to write and say "*I thank you*," for myself. Because the work has extended to me and blessed my life I want to tell you that I am grateful and glad. We love you, dear Mr. Sheldon, for all that you have done and for all that you are to us, and to the world. . . .

(Miss) MARY E. LAING.

St. Cloud, Minn.

[From a letter to Dr. Sheldon, May 4, 1889.]

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I have never known a person to be narrow-minded after spending two years in your school, and this I attribute largely to the influence—liberal yet Christian—of our honored Principal over those under his charge. . . .

IRVING WASHBURN.

Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y.

[From a letter to Dr. Sheldon, June 30, 1881.]

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Friday morning I received notice of Dr. Sheldon's death. Though I realized that he was old and that he was ill time and again last winter, yet the intelligence came to me as a great shock.

It seems to me that one of Dr. Sheldon's most striking and helpful characteristics was his readiness to regard every one with whom he came in contact as possessed of his own high ideals and strength of character. This was manifested in the confidence he placed in the students, and exerted a peculiarly potent influence upon them. One would be base indeed who would knowingly do that which would render him unworthy of such confidence. . . . His own calmness and fortitude in his great sorrow, his cheery way and his great patience seem to indicate the manner in which it would be pleasing to him to have us regard his memory.

How well I recall that first morning he was again with us after

Mrs. Sheldon's death. It seemed to me that it would be impossible for him to resume his work again at his age after having suffered such a loss. Yet there he stood with the calmness of a perfect peace upon his face. You remember the first words he spoke to us,—“You are, in a sense, my children and children are always interested in that which interests the father, and you will want to know somewhat of my feeling at this time.” Then how lovingly he spoke of Mrs. Sheldon and of all that she had been to him—of her great part in his life and work.

It has come to me that one of the ways which make for the building up of that which is truest and best in human lives, is this according to every individual right motives and honesty of purpose, inciting him to be worthy of his treatment. I think very few students, as far as my own observation went, ever caused Dr. Sheldon to regret the confidence he placed in them. . . .

(Miss) L. L. LOVERIDGE,  
Madison, Ohio.

[From a letter to Miss C. L. G. Scales, August 31, 1897.]

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Several letters have come to light telling the tale of how Mr. Sheldon assisted pupils or friends in financial straits. This he had occasion to do many times, nor was he the only one in the Normal School faculty, who thus put their confidence in the students or graduates. So far as I know, Mr. Sheldon never lost anything in this way with students, although I think he did with others. These loans sometimes ran a number of years.

I cannot forbear quoting a very touching passage found in a letter from a friend (not a Normal student) who had suffered extreme financial distress connected with atrocious unkindness on the part of his employers:

“I will not write now about the two hundred dollars you sent me further than to say that it came to me as a precious boon in time of sorest need—that I shall retain some of it, using it only in distress, for it seems to me different altogether from other money, *not* as mere *money*, but as something invested with *character* savoring of humanity. The circumstance will be one of the sweetest memories, most miserly cherished, of my arduous life.”

Mr. Sheldon was himself time and again in financial distress, and as he himself has frequently said, “all his life a borrower.” But so strong was the confidence of his acquaintances in his integrity and firmness of purpose, that he never failed to obtain needed resources, with one exception, on easy terms. In this one exception he was burdened with paying compound interest for

years. But neither in this nor in other cases did he fail to meet his agreement, principal and interest.

Nevertheless, his example, in borrowing, while it proved advantageous to some who knew and followed it, may be fairly said to have proved dangerous to others. Some who followed the same course to enable them to carry out large life-plans, had not the firmness of will and the confidence of others, needed to carry them through to the same happy result. I should not feel justified in speaking so frankly of this phase of his life, did I not add the caution here conveyed, which seems to me of the utmost importance.

A very interesting passage pertaining to the topic of this chapter occurs in a letter received by the writer some years ago from one of our most prominent graduates, one who has made her activities useful in a large way wherever she has been placed. This passage indicates the influence of Dr. Sheldon's character outside of educational circles:

*From Mrs. Lena H. Severance.*

Buffalo, October 17, 1897.

.....

. . . I felt that your father could not live alone many years, but he is yet so much needed it is hard to feel we must give him up now. I myself knew of work that it seems to me only he could have done. We have here soon the National Meeting of the W. C. T. U. In this State as in many others, compulsory educational laws have been passed in regard to temperance instruction in schools. Your father thought it the most serious blow the temperance movement had ever had. It was passed entirely through the efforts of the W. C. T. U. The only person to whom they would have listened was your father. At the coming meeting, as local manager for this branch of the work, I had hoped to have a discussion of the best method of moral teaching, between Mrs. Hunt, the originator of the law (and the woman who has had it passed in 44 States), and Mr. Sheldon. These women would have listened to him because they knew him as an ardent worker in their cause; and once in a receptive frame of mind, he could have shown them the mischief they may do through ignorance of the way in which the desired result can be reached.

. . . I wish the earthly remains of both your parents might have been laid to rest under some of those beautiful trees out at Shady Shore. They seemed a part of that place and to the end of my days I shall want to make pilgrimages there. Your father was such a patient, gentle soul, and yet such a tower of strength!

(Mrs.) LENA H. SEVERANCE.

Buffalo. N. Y., October 17, 1897.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### THE POLITICAL SIDE OF DR. SHELDON'S CAREER

[Editorial.]

THE events of Dr. Sheldon's life present many proofs that he had in him some strong elements of the politician—perhaps we should rather say, of the statesman. He had always not merely to guide his school steadily along the Pestalozzian path, which required the utmost care in the selection of teachers; he had also to keep watch for its financial welfare and for its very existence, dependent upon political influence for twenty years after its foundation.

Reference has already been made to the efforts put forth to secure its establishment. The struggle for its preservation and for increased appropriations, to meet its growing needs, went on more or less for years, until, in 1877, a special effort was apparently made to cut down the Normal School appropriations to a crippling point, or to wipe them out entirely.

At this time a committee was appointed by Legislature to make a tour of the State Normal Schools, to investigate what they were really doing, and to call upon each teacher engaged in them to argue, in special Faculty meeting, for the usefulness of his department, to a Normal school. This was a memorable occasion to the writer, who, at a very youthful age, was temporarily teaching Latin and Greek in the Oswego school, and who had, in fact, no very firm conviction as to their importance there. It would probably have pleased Dr. Sheldon quite as well, if she had inveighed against them. Supposing it to be necessary to "hold the fort," however, she made her best effort to that end—much to the private amusement of the rest of the Faculty, who had seen her grow up from babyhood, and who probably also detected some sophistry in her arguments. However, the public protest that was made, when, many years after, the Classical Department was dropped at

the instigation of Dr. Sheldon, would prove that there were at least plausible arguments on the side of retaining it.

The Committee reported favorably for the Normal Schools, and from that time their career was triumphant.

In a letter to Mrs. Barnes, some time during the last year of his life, Dr. Sheldon speaks of two very important lines of work for the State, in which he had engaged:

.....

My hobbies, so far as the educational work of the State is concerned, have been "unification," and a "graded system of teachers' normal and training schools." (This term training school was first applied to our own school.) At an early day I called attention to the importance of a system of elementary training schools as a part of the greater system of professional schools, and read a paper before the Regents' Convocation at Albany. This was in 1888. This led to the appointing of a committee by the Association of Academic Principals at a subsequent meeting to consider and report on this subject. I was made chairman of this committee. This committee discussed plans of organization, courses of instruction, etc., etc.

To make a long story short, the outcome was the transferring of teachers' classes in the Academies which were under the direction of the Board of Regents, to the department of public instruction and the organization of the "Elementary Training Schools" which have been very much perfected since, and are likely to be very much more improved. They are the lowest grade in the system of training schools. The regular Normal Schools are the next grade, which ought also to be graded, as I have always contended. To a limited extent this is also being accomplished. The Oswego School has broken away, as you know. Three of the schools have also adopted a course for the special training of primary and kindergarten teachers, a course that I have long been working for and have only been able to accomplish during the past year. Fur-

ther grading ought to be made, but I have been stontly opposed in this by the other principals. who do not like to give up anything they already have. The consequence is that they are all top-heavy, and can do nothing well in the multitude of things they undertake to do. The next grade that ought to be established, and which is sure to come, is the university training school for the training of high school teachers. I think such a school will be established at Cornell very soon. It is already being seriously discussed. The State Superintendent favors it, and they want it at Cornell. I should not be at all surprised if an act is passed this winter establishing such a department. . . .

Probably his efforts in behalf of "Unification" cost Dr. Sheldon more time and labor, extending through a longer period of years, than any other cause that he took up, outside of immediate school work. Of this, he continues, in the above letter, as follows:

My efforts at unification never materialized. It was in the winter of 1874 that I suggested to the principals of the Normal Schools of the State that we make an effort to unite all the educational interests of the State under one head. At that time there was a very bitter state of feeling existing between the Board of Regents and the Department of Public Intrsuction and the schools belonging to these two departments.

The principals approved of the proposition, and sent Dr. McVicar and myself to Albany to accomplish this object if possible. We drafted an act and submitted it to the Legislature . . .

I canvassed all parts of the State quite thoroughly, visiting members of the Board of Regents, leading educational men, the leading newspapers of the State, and carried a very strong sentiment with us in favor of the plan. We also called a conference of the more prominent educational men of the State at Albany, who also favored the scheme. The Board of Regents was heart and hand with us, as was also

Mr. Abram B. Weaver, the retiring superintendent. The bill was killed, nevertheless in the Legislature.

I made another effort at the time of the election of Mr. Draper, in 1886.\* Again, in 1894, before the constitutional convention for the amendment of the constitution of the State, I tried to get the plan inaugurated in the constitution, but I was left rather single-handed, and my efforts failed for want of proper support.

In the meantime the Regents have been entrenching themselves more and more strongly, and it is doubtful whether "unification" will ever be realized.

Great good, however, has grown out of the movement. It has tended to bring together and regulate the educational work of the State, and effect a good state of feeling between the educational men belonging to the two departments. In this way a great gain has been made, and so I feel that my work has not been altogether vain.

*Pres. A. D. White to E. A. S.*

The Cornell University,  
Ithaca, N. Y., Aug. 7, 1876.

Prof. E. A. Sheldon,  
Principal State Normal School.

My Dear Sir:

Returning to Ithaca I find your kind letter. Your deliberate approval of our system of instruction, evidenced as it is by your decision to send those in whom you take the deepest interest, is, I assure you, no small gratification to me. Such testimonies, after the struggle we have had to make, are calculated to give courage for any future struggle.

I acquiesce without reserve in your idea as to the desirability of making a diploma of graduation from the State Normal Schools a sufficient evidence of good study to enable the bearer to enter here without further examination in the branches taught in such schools. At the next meeting of our faculty I will bring the matter up, and, as I hope, be able to carry it through.

To bring this University into a close, vital connection with the whole system of public education in our State has always been one of the leading aims of my ambition; and I see in your proposal an important means in its accomplishment.

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\*Significant extracts from an address delivered by Dr. Sheldon on "Unification," at this time will be found in the Appendix.



You spoke of one or two other thoughts which you had intended to present. I shall be truly glad to receive them whenever convenient to you to put them on paper. . . .

Very respectfully and truly yours,

ANDREW D. WHITE.

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*Prin. H. B. Buckham to E. A. S.*

Buffalo, N. Y., March 11, 1877.

Dear Sir:—

I am not content to let our school matters rest as they are, with the certainty of a renewed and more hopeful attack next year. I think we ought to go to the *root* of the matter at once. Will you join the other principals in a petition for the appointment of a Commission to inquire carefully into, and report to the next Legislature upon these points?

1. The putting of all common schools and their officers under one management.

2. The requiring of a *minimum* of Normal Training for all teachers of common schools.

3. Some means of putting Normal Schools into more direct contact with common schools.

4. Course of study in Normal Schools, and the connection of Academic departments therewith.

5. Teachers' classes and Teachers' Institutes and how to make them work in harmony with Normal Schools.

If you will do this, give me your notion of the Commission. I should say the Superintendent, a Regent, a Commissioner, a Normal School man, and a College man.

Yours,

H. B. BUCKHAM.

Dr. Sheldon died without seeing the accomplishment of the object for which he had worked so long; and, in fact, as his words prove, having abandoned the hope that it ever would be achieved. But the life energies that had been expended in its behalf had not been dissipated. In the full course of time they developed the long-desired fruit.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### REVIEW AND REMINISCENCE

By Mary Sheldon Barnes.

SOME circumstances of Dr. Sheldon's life escaped mention, or were treated too briefly in the autobiography, owing to the fragmentary, hasty way in which it was necessarily written, and probably somewhat to the doubt of the author about its ever being published. The missing material cannot be presented in a better way than has already been done by his daughter, Mary Sheldon Barnes, in two articles: one written for the Quarter-Centennial book of the Oswego Training School, published in 1887, and the other for "*The School Journal*," New York, immediately after Dr. Sheldon's decease, 1897.

In the following extracts, the contents of the two articles are combined, in such a way as to sustain the connection. They are given, not always as presenting new matter, but in some instances because they throw main points into a strong light, and so form a striking review.—Editor.

My father's life falls naturally into three periods: that of his youth and early manhood—a preparatory period; that of organizing the public school system in Oswego, and the training school for teachers that grew out of that system—a period of rapid and strenuous development; and, finally, a period during which his ideas and methods diffused themselves over a wide area—a period of naturally growing prosperity and success.

His work and his life all center about the beloved school whose destinies he moulded from 1861 to the day of his death. The Oswego school during all that time stood as an experiment station in Pestalozzian method, and as a group of vigorous and original personalities, all working with won-

derful devotion to their leader, whose loving heart and progressive will was felt through every day in every act.

While yet a teacher of his beloved "ragged school," my father had married Miss Frances Stiles, and to this union he always accredited—and to my mind, truly—a large part of his success. My mother was not only beautiful and accomplished in all social graces, but she had great fortitude of character, wide and warm intellectual interests, and an unusual education for a woman of her generation. She had need of all those gifts; for she was not only to be the mother of five children, but the helpmeet of her husband through years of poverty, of hard, and often excessive, labor, of all the opposition and friction which his original and determined character was to bring upon them. But her soul was pre-eminent in cheerfulness, in courage, in faith and love, and my father always found in his home happiness, brightness and complete understanding and faith—secret sources of unflinching energy and strength.

In the temporary defeat of the free school party, my father tried to start a private school, but before it was fairly begun he obtained the appointment of superintendent of public schools in Syracuse. During the two or three years in which he held this office, he consolidated, graded, and organized the lower schools, brought together various ill-kept collections of books into a central library, to-day one of the most flourishing and valuable possessions of Syracuse, and gave the impulse and the plan which resulted in the foundation of one of the finest high schools in our State. His report was the first annual school report of Syracuse.

The free-school party, of Oswego, meanwhile, being "in harmony with the constitution of things," had come to the day of their success, and called my father back to organize and shape their new system. In May, 1853, he became the first superintendent of schools in Oswego, and in September the schools were ready to start.

The schools were organized; his active mind began to reflect on their curriculum and method; and to his fresh and practical insight, they seemed not to meet the actual needs of human nature. He felt that they were a long way off from the real world of matter and force; that children were naturally and righteously interested in the objective world, in their own bodies, in their vital relations to things and each other. In this mood he visited Toronto, and then saw—not in the schools, but in a museum—a collection of teaching appliances from the Home and Colonial School, in London, that seemed to suit his sense of fitness. Well do I remember the delight with which he returned from his visit, importing samples of what he wanted.

The dark shelves of the little closets opening off from the dingy office where my father worked all day were filled with wonders delightful to my childish eyes, and to his own as well. We used to talk them over—colored balls and cards, bright-colored pictures of animals, building blocks, silk-worm cocoons, cotton-balls, specimens of pottery and glass.

In the annual report for that same year, ending March 31, 1860, appeared an epoch-making programme, laid out along distinctly Pestalozzian lines. This programme contained conversational exercises, moral instruction, physical actions and employments, lessons on form, color, size, weight, and number, animals, human body, common objects, gymnastics, singing, and drawing, as well as reading, writing, and spelling. In connection with it, my father wrote this paragraph, which admirably embodies his whole ideal and philosophy of practical instruction:

“In this plan of studies the object is not so much to impart information as to educate the senses, and awaken a spirit of inquiry. To this end the pupils must be encouraged to do most of the talking and acting. They must be allowed to draw their own conclusions, and if wrong, led to correct them. The books should only be used for

reference, and as models for the lessons to be given. The children should be allowed to have two short recesses of ten minutes each, morning and afternoon, and gymnastic and singing exercises should be frequently introduced, to give change of position and rest to the children, and keep up an animated and pleasant state of feeling. The younger children should not be detained at the school building to exceed four hours each day; and the older ones may be excused as they get through with their exercises."

When this programme was offered, the board of education trusted and "stood by," the teachers were frightened, the parents were unconscious, or astonished and doubtful, the children rejoiced. My father was immediately drawn into the work of helping his teachers; he was constantly with them in their school-rooms; he met them every Saturday morning for a long discussion of their needs and troubles. By the end of the year every one felt the need of a special training class for teachers who were to do this real sort of work; and they naturally looked for a trainer to the Home and Colonial Training Institution in London, a school founded by a pupil and friend of Pestalozzi. It is characteristic of the courage of my father's nature that he proposed to import such a trainer, even on the hard condition named by the Board, that it "should not cost the city a single cent"; and it is characteristic of the devotion felt for him by his fellow-workers that he was able to persuade many of his teachers to resign a part of their meagre salaries to pay for this importation, in lieu of the instruction they should obtain. In this way and others the money was raised, the London trainer came, and the training work began in May, 1861, in the form of a city training school—the first of its kind. This soon broadened to a training school for primary teachers, and in 1865 it was incorporated as the Oswego State Normal and Training School, with my father as principal, and Herman Krusi, a former teacher in the Home

and Colonial, the son of one of Pestalozzi's closest associates, as a living link between him and Pestalozzi.

These years from 1860 to 1870 were the epic years of my father's life, and perhaps were stirred into higher activity by the fact that they were epic years in the natural life. He was determined to enlist for the war, but was rejected for physical reasons; but every day of the long struggle was watched with the highest interest, often rising into excitement. I never saw my father so hilarious as on the day of Lee's surrender; he came home with a little flag stuck in his hat, and there was nothing more but festival on that day; and I never saw him so overwhelmed with any public grief as when Lincoln was assassinated. Just because the times were great and stirring, I believe he found it easier to live through these hard and stirring years of his own life. This story has often been told in connection with his school; the violent opposition of the older school men, the distrust and fear of the Oswego parents, the committee of investigation appointed by the National Association, their favorable report, the national interest at length awakened in Pestalozzian methods, and in the training of teachers. Through all, he was supported by the warm devotion of a group of friends in his faculty and board who believed in him with all their hearts.

With all this active life of the reformer, organizer, and propagandist, my father was engaged as an author, as well. In 1862 the Scribners brought out his "Manual of Elementary Instruction," and in 1863, his "Lessons on Objects."

As principal of the young Training School, a place which fell to him naturally, he was involved in an ever increasing correspondence and a certain amount of teaching. As superintendent of the City Schools, he was necessarily engaged in a heavy and perpetual routine of visiting schools, keeping accounts, looking after cases of discipline, making out examination questions and marking examination papers—in short, in the thousand petty details known only to one

familiar with the business. These were the bare necessities of the case; add to these the care of the city library, the preparation of various papers and addresses—the editing and publication of the manuals—the preparation of a set of Reading Charts and Books—active labors in the Sunday School and Church—the cares of a growing family, lately transplanted to the newly finished house by the lake, which has since become our dear, familiar home.

It will be readily understood that my father's day was a busy one. He invariably rose at five, and, after lighting the fires, wrote or studied until a seven o'clock breakfast. After this, he was off for his schools, taking with him his children and a cold lunch, returning home at five or six for dinner; he generally spent two hours or more in study or work before retiring at ten or half past. These studies were of the most various sort; sometimes the relation of subjects in the curriculum; sometimes readings in Hamilton, or Spencer, or Locke; sometimes "Barnard's Journal"; sometimes Harris' "Insects Injurious to Vegetation." This latter book was quite a classic with my father and me. We would sit in an unfurnished room of our unfinished house of an evening, with the light burning, so as to attract insects in at the open windows. Since our house was in the woods, just broken by clearing, we would soon have a delightful collection of moths, beetles, and flies, which we caught, killed, and then tried to determine by comparison with his book, an operation in which my father found me an enthusiastic, rather than valuable assistant. This keen and special interest in insects, came about from the fact that my father's own work in the young training school was for some time zoology, and he saw that, with masses of children, insects gave one of the easiest and most inviting entrances to the whole domain of organic life. This idea, however, cost him much persecution and ridicule in various quarters, from those who could not readily understand the



connection between grasshoppers and a well-educated child, not knowing grasshoppers very well themselves.

My father delighted in his work; rejoiced in it; so that he felt the need of recreation less than most men. Still he found it in his family, in his orchard, in trimming the trees of the natural grove by Lake Ontario, where he had planted his home. He had, moreover, a strong and sustaining religious life, which gave him faith in the righteousness and value of life, and not a week passed by without its seasons of earnest, solitary prayer.

Nothing succeeds like success. With 1865, honors and prosperity began to come. In 1862 he was elected superintendent of the schools in Troy, but declined the honor, although the place was more important and central than Oswego, and the salary larger by some hundreds than that he then received, for the simple, but sufficient reason that he felt that his training-school work was not yet ripe for an independent life. The books on methods not only stirred up teachers throughout our own country, but had a large sale in England itself, as we heard, Oswego became a sort of educational pilgrimage-point; in 1865 came the formal action of the National Educational Committee, endorsing the Oswego methods as sound. In 1867 my father was invited to found a pedagogical department in the University of Missouri, and in the same year he was strongly urged to become principal of the State Normal School in Albany. Nothing is more characteristic than the way in which my father refused these offers. In answer to the Albany offer, he replied:

"I have endeavored to put myself in a position of willingness to pursue the line of duty, without any reference to personal inclinations, seeking simply to know my Father's will, and to do it. I am told positively that should I leave, all further effort for this school will be abandoned, and that it cannot be sustained. I know much yet remains to be done for this school; there are others who can do this as well



as I, but this makes little difference as long as the feeling is such as it is. It would not be right for me to jeopardize the interests here, unless a greater good could be accomplished elsewhere. I can assure you I have carefully and prayerfully weighed the whole matter, and after a severe conflict between inclination and a sense of duty, I am led to decline your flattering offer."

From 1869, the story of my father's life passes into the larger life of the school he had founded. The training school had become the State Normal and Training School, and demanded his energies so completely that in September, 1869, he resigned his place as superintendent of the City Schools and gave himself entirely to the duties of this principalship. At this time, too, he received the degree of A. M. from Hamilton, an honor all the more gratifying from the fact that he had been unable to take his first degree.\*

He had still to experience a deal of local opposition to his work. In 1872 began what my father always designated as the "big fight"; yet it was confined to the city of Oswego, and began by the offering of the following proposition to the Board of Education in that city:

*"Resolved, That we discontinue object teaching in our junior schools and substitute instead Cornell's Primary Geography and Appleton's Elementary Arithmetic."*

This simple, intelligible and intelligent (?) resolution was the opening of a most severe and bitter attack upon what was understood as object teaching. This attack lasted the better part of a year, and its grounds, as appearing in the papers, were, that the pupils did not easily pass from one grade to another, that teachers and parents wished text-books instead of oral lessons, that the expense of sending children to school was greatly increased by having to buy so many text-books, that the pupils were not able to pass regents' examinations, that the pupils were held in school

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\*To this was added, in 1875, the degree of Ph. D. from the Regents of the University of New York.

longer than formerly, and that the number of teachers had been increased.

My father had before encountered opposition; he had, in earlier years, been accused of teaching the children "cruelty," on account of the collecting furor roused by some lessons on insects; he had been nick-named "The Pope" on account of his predominant influence in the Board of Education; he had had to meet sarcastic and serious criticism of Pestalozzian principles, but never had he met anything so bitter, personal and discouraging as this local attack; its nature and spirit can best be shown by the following extracts from the daily papers of the time:

"This system, whatever it is \* \* \* was introduced here under the personal supervision and direction of its most eminent advocate. We had almost said its inventor. He selected and trained his teachers, without let or hindrance, and has succeeded in one way and another, in working out of their situations nearly every teacher not especially trained in his methods, or who differed with him as to their value."

"I believe nine out of ten heads of families here look upon the Oswego system of schools as a mischievous, expensive and cruel humbug. \* \* \* If your correspondent, Mr. Editor, had the management of public education in this city, he would make many changes. In the first place, he would discontinue the High School. \* \* \* There is no justice or propriety in levying a tax upon the whole people to teach a few children botany or geometry or Latin. \* \* \* He would drop from the (public school) course of study everything but reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and grammar. \* \* \* In the next place, he would return to the kind and form of school-books that were in use twenty-five years ago. \* \* \* Object teaching and gymnastics should be sent out of doors again. Does a child need to go to school to learn about light and heavy, about rough and smooth? \* \* \* Are our children more muscular or more symmetrical than

they were before they were taught to paw the air in rhythm?  
\* \* \* The introduction of this principle has of late tended to increase the number of teachers. \* \* \* The more teachers we have, the higher price, of course, we must pay for each. A diminished demand would be more economically supplied."

"The Pestalozzian propagandists are just now filling the *Press* with interminably long and dreary articles on the 'great underlying principles' of the 'Objective Methods of Teaching.' Nobody but the man who writes these *wrong wanderings* reads them, and they are consequently unworthy of serious consideration. At the election in May the people will have something to say about a system by which they have been humbugged out of large sums of money and an incalculable amount of time."

"The tax-payers of Oswego will see to it that their schools shall be run in the interests of sound practical education, and not \* \* \* to build up fortunes of Book Publishing Rings, and Pestalozzian monomaniacs."

"We have very little hope that the people will effect a reform in this matter. Too many men live by this humbug to render it easy of destruction."

"We have yet to hear of a person outside of the Pestalozzi Ring, who does not believe that Objective Teaching in Oswego schools has failed."

"We have yet to find a person not directly interested in the profits of 'the system,' who does not agree with us that Reading, Writing, English Grammar, Arithmetic and Geography—and those branches only—should be taught in the Public Schools at the public expense."

"Teachers can keep carriages, Common Council men have to travel on foot."

Aided by a few strong friends, my father met these charges seriously and temperately; admitted that mistakes

might have been made, indicated some errors of administration, and in a series of careful papers tried to show the good people of Oswego the innermost meaning and drift of objective methods. Nevertheless, the "popular reform" was carried; lessons in color, form, size, animals and plans were thrown out of the programme after the close of the first primary year; map-drawing was a thing of the past; "Cornell's Geography and Appleton's Arithmetic" had a clear field; no teachers were to be employed who were not natives of Oswego; for a short time, the High School itself was abolished; and by these measures, *Objective Methods* were supposed to be slain.

Before 1880, years of toil and labor began to tell upon my father's firm constitution, and in 1879 he felt that he must resign his place as principal of the school, which had become a part of his very life. It was then that strong friendships came forward to sustain him; the Normal School Board would accept only a temporary resignation, and insisted upon continuing his salary; his faculty, hard-worked as they always were, generously divided his work among themselves, in order that he still might keep his place; and this was no sudden impulse, but through all the dark, depressing months of a prolonged nervous prostration, with its slow and seemingly uncertain recovery, his friends never failed in their constancy and helpfulness. It was during these dark days that my father turned to country life again, and in light occupation about his orchard, about his hens and bees, began to find returning interest, and, as days went on, returning health and hope; 1881 saw him once more ready to enter upon the full duties of his principalship, which he has since held with ever-increasing vigor.

With these exceptions, his work progressed strongly and constantly. In 1874 he brought out with the Scribners a series of "Readers," which had great vogue; in 1881 he added a kindergarten and a kindergarten training class to the school, the first department of this sort in a normal

school; in 1886 he opened shops for the training of teachers in industrial work.

In this year occurred the Quarter-Centennial celebration of the school, an occasion which assembled not only Alumni, but prominent educators from all over the country, to assist in what was certainly one of the most heart-felt jubilees that ever took place. It partook of the nature of a friendly gathering, besides presenting a demonstration of the tremendous growth of an idea deeply affecting the welfare of the public.

In this year it may be said of my father's particular lines of activity, that he was at work on three practical problems. One was, how best to connect the Kindergarten smoothly with the primary schools; the second, the unification of the school systems of New York State; the third, how to elicit from industrial work its true educational value.

But the prime study absorbing his mind, was one of theory, and perhaps even more fundamental than these: What are the psychological *facts* which should underly our educational methods? What can children themselves teach us of the ways by which they acquire knowledge, and develop mental power? This study led him to invite to our school, from the University of Jena, Germany, Dr. Mohlberg, a disciple of the famous Herbart. With his aid he hoped to make some genuine progress in enlarging the psychological outlook of our teachers and in making our methods more soundly philosophical.

At the World's Fair of 1893 he was made president of the department of professional training of teachers, and received for the Oswego school a medal of honor, and a diploma "For excellence of equipment, method, and wide usefulness throughout its long history under one principal. For excellence of educational methods and literature, as evidenced by their use in the United States."

Wherever he went in these last years he was received by his old pupils as a father and friend beloved. His white

crown of hair, his pure brow, his beautiful blue eyes, sympathetic, true and clear, attracted even strangers. To children, he was irresistible; to his nearest and dearest, he was an ideal character, tender and strong. In his death, too, he was fortunate, for it came quickly and found him still at work, in possession of all his powers; and it came, too, as a longed-for messenger from his beloved wife, who had left him a little more than a year before. "Of such are the salt of the earth."

## APPENDIX





## APPENDIX

### UNIFICATION IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.\*

By E. A. SHELDON, Ph. D., Oswego, N. Y.

Whatever differences of opinion may have previously existed as to the importance of the unification of the educational work of the State, we are sure we must all agree now that some plan ought to be adopted by which our forces may be united into one grand educational system, with a single supervising head. It seems to us as strange as it is unfortunate that two separate and distinct educational departments should have been allowed to grow up in our State, and we propose in this discussion, to trace some of the causes that led to this division.

It is a little more than one hundred years since the organization of the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York. The object of this organization was to give direction and supervision to higher education in the State.

Without doubt, Oxford and Cambridge were the models in the minds of the statesmen who, at that early day in our history, thought to lay the foundations for university education in New York. Kings College alone then existed, and by the creation of the Board of Regents this lone institution whose title was then changed to Columbia College, was abundantly provided for in the way of supervision in all the minutest details pertaining to its organization and management. This was regarded as the nucleus of a system of colleges that would eventually grow up in the State

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\*Address delivered in 1886 and reported for the *SCHOOL JOURNAL*, New York (abridged).

under the authority, direction and control of this Board. The Regents were to grant all charters, appoint the faculties, determine the attainments in scholarship to be required for the honorary degrees, which they alone had the power to confer. These various colleges thus to be grouped under one supervising and controlling superior faculty, were to constitute the "University of the State of New York."

The Board of Regents soon made the discovery that so large a Board, widely distributed over the State, was not well adapted to the management and administration of the internal affairs of a college and much less of a number of colleges located in different and distant parts of the State, and by their own recommendation, Columbia College, and future colleges that might be created, were by legislative enactment, made practically independent in their organization and administration, subject only to such rules and regulations as might be prescribed by their charters of incorporation. Each college was to have its own board of trustees to have immediate supervision and management of its affairs. By the revised act of the Legislature passed April 13, 1787, by the recommendation of the Board of Regents, not only was this change in the relation of the Regents to the colleges effected, but the Board itself was constituted, in connection with the colleges, academies and other institutions that might be chartered by them, the "University of the State of New York," under the title of the "Regents of the University of the State of New York."

By this act the Board was relieved of the administrative work of the colleges, but the duty still devolved on them of visiting these institutions, of examining into the system of education and discipline pursued, and making a report to the Legislature of the same. This act also contemplated the establishment of academies to be chartered by this Board, and placed under its fostering care and supervision.

At this time (1787) no public schools existed. But in

a report of a committee of the Board we find this passage: "Before your committee conclude, they feel themselves bound, in faithfulness, to add, that the erecting of public schools for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic is an object of great importance, which ought not to be left to the discretion of private men, but be promoted by public authority."

In very similar language we find that the Board in their successive annual reports for 1793-4 and 5 urged upon the Legislature the importance of establishing public common schools for instruction in the elementary branches of education. Following up these recommendations, Governor Clinton, who was a member of the Board, urged upon the Legislature the importance of "early and decided consideration" of this question.

Whether the result of these recommendations of the Board and the governor, or of the convictions that had been for many years slowly but steadily growing in the minds of the people that elementary as well as advanced education ought to be encouraged by the State, it is impossible at this distance of time to know with any degree of certainty, but it is very probable that both of these influences combined to secure the following spring the passage of "An Act for the Encouragement of the Schools."

This act appropriated \$50,000 annually for five years, "for the purpose of encouraging and maintaining schools in the several cities and towns in this State, in which the children of the inhabitants residing in the State shall be instructed in the English language or be taught English grammar, arithmetic, mathematics, and such other branches of knowledge as are most useful and necessary to complete a good education." One half as much as was appropriated by the State was to be raised by tax on the towns, to be applied in the same manner. Local supervision was provided by the election of commissioners in the several towns, but no arrangement was made for a general supervision. This act

expired by limitation, as did also, to a very great extent, the schools brought into existence by it. It is true, a few schools continued, but in a languishing and feeble condition; and the system was practically given up.

Five years after the expiration of this grant we find Governor Lewis, in a special message, urging upon the Legislature "the application of the proceeds of all the State lands for the benefit of colleges and schools; the entire fund and its management to be confided to the Regents of the University, under such regulations as the Legislature might prescribe—the Regents to appoint three trustees for each district, who should be authorized to locate sites for school houses, to erect such houses wherever necessary, employ teachers, apply the district funds, and levy taxes on the inhabitants for such further sums as might be required for the support of the schools, and the education of indigent children." The recommendation was not adopted, and all efforts to establish a public school system was unavailing until 1812; when, in compliance with the recommendation of Governor Tompkins, a system was adopted which continued with little change until 1840. This plan had in it the elements of success and efficiency, although as compared with our present organization, it seems a weak and penny-wise system.

It is not a little strange that at the time of the inauguration of this public school system it was not put under the charge of the Board of Regents, to whom, up to this time, all educational work had been entrusted, and especially in view of the fact that they had repeatedly urged upon the Legislation the adoption of such a system, and at least, one of the governors had recommended that it be placed under the control and management of the Board. This would seem to have been a very natural and proper thing to do, and we can only account for their neglecting to do so on the supposition that they regarded these newly created schools as a sort of pauper or charity schools, and so re-

quiring different treatment, and different supervision. We have grounds for this suspicion from some things that appear in the history of this movement.

Be that as it may, whatever may have been the motive, Gideon Hawley was appointed to inaugurate the new movement, under the title of Superintendent of Public Schools. As an illustration of the meagreness of this provision, the amount distributed to each district was about twenty dollars, and the annual salary of the superintendent was three hundred dollars. But although the compensation was so insignificant, the man proved himself competent for the work of organizing and putting upon a firm basis the common school system of the State.

One would think that such a man, with so meagre a salary, coupled with such serious responsibilities, might have been safe in his office of superintendent, as against the cupidity of the politicians. But such was not the case. This man, who with marked ability, and untiring assiduity had organized and put into successful operation the school system of the State which stood more than a quarter of a century without material change, was forced to yield his position to a political hanger-on. To the credit of some of the leading men in the Legislature be it said, that they were so indignant that an able, worthy man, who was discharging his duties with commendable faithfulness and marked success should be compelled to give place to one who knew nothing of the work or duties of the position, and whose only recommendation was his political alliance with the party commanding the most votes, and that a purely educational office, requiring professional knowledge and skill, and carrying with it great responsibilities, should be made the football of political parties, that they moved to abolish the office, as a distinct department, and merge it with that of secretary of state. This motion was carried and the office of State Superintendent of Public Schools was not

restored to its original dignity and importance, as a separate bureau, until 1854, a period of 34 years.

The first superintendent to occupy the office after its reinstatement as a separate and independent bureau, was Victor M. Rice. With the history of this office from this time, we are all familiar. We recognize among his successors in office men of unflinching integrity and marked executive ability; men who, if time and opportunity had been given them, would have made their mark on the educational work of the State, but the office has been a changeable one, subject to the fluctuations of party politics.

#### NO PERMANENCY IN OFFICE

No superintendent could have the assurance of his position for more than three years. Although some of the men have done very much for the cause of education in the State, all must admit that their time of service was quite too short in which to lay out and perfect any important educational plans and improvements, requiring years of growth to bring them to maturity. In some cases much has been accomplished, far more than could have been anticipated under the circumstances, but it cannot be denied that both the inducements and opportunities would have been greater if these men could have had reasonable assurance of permanency in their positions. That this position ought to be removed from the arena of politics and from all that machinery that results in rotation, and put upon an educational and permanent basis, no one questions.

#### DIVIDED AUTHORITY

Another unfortunate feature of our school supervision which we are sure every one recognizes, is its dual character, the higher departments being under the Board of Regents, and the lower under the superintendent. So far as the academic departments in the Union Free Schools are

concerned, the supervision is divided between the two supervisory heads.

The tendency of this divided supervision has been to foster more or less of jealousy and animosity between the schools so separated in their supervision, and, at times, between the Superintendent and the Board. This condition of things is very naturally a serious impediment to the highest success in school work. From time to time propositions have been made to consolidate all supervisory powers in one head, sometimes by subordinating the superintendent to the Board of Regents, sometimes by subordinating the Board to the Superintendent, and again by abolishing the Board of Regents altogether. Both departments have been jealous of an independent existence, and, in every instance, each has been able to wield influence sufficient to maintain it. And yet the feeling has continued to gain strength in every quarter that something ought to be done, to break down this middle wall of partition in our educational work.

#### THE TIME FOR UNIFICATION HAS COME

We believe the time has come when this may be accomplished. Both departments of supervision realize the importance of this consolidation and are ready to accept it, provided it may be accomplished in such a way as to be mutually honorable to both. This cannot be done by abolishing either department, and there is no necessity for such a measure. In every well arranged system of supervision all the elements contained in each department are required. In other words we want both a Board of Education and a Superintendent, but we want them so combined as to constitute one head. Since both departments regard such a combination as desirable and are ready to accept it, the way seems open for its accomplishment, if our Legislature can be made to see the importance of such a movement. Twelve years ago a plan was submitted to the Legislature which at that time met with the approbation of the Board of Regents,



the Academy, Normal School, and College men, and the educational men generally throughout the State, so far as an expression could be gained from them. This bill would, without doubt, have passed the Legislature at that time but for the opposition of the incoming Superintendent and his political friends. A different state of things now exists, and the time seems an opportune one for the accomplishment of this much to be desired end.

#### A UNIFICATION PLAN

The following were the main features of that bill: It provided for the erection of a State Board of Education, to consist of ten members, seven to be selected from the present Board of Regents by the Governor, and three from outside this Board by the joint ballot of the Assembly and Senate. Of the ten men thus elected, the time of office of two was to terminate at the end of one year, two at the end of two years, two at the end of three years, two at the end of four years, and two at the end of five years; and after this rotation, the term of office would be five years, two going out and two being elected each year by the joint ballot of the Legislature. By this plan it is possible to completely change the Board in five years if desired. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State were to be added as *ex officio* members.

This Board was to appoint the State Superintendent, to hold office for three years, as also his deputies, on the nomination of the superintendent. The Board is to have all the powers and duties that now devolve on the State Superintendent and the Board of Regents. Such a Board seems to us to combine all the elements requisite for a good supervisory unit in a harmonious and acceptable form.



## LIFE AND CHARACTER OF DR. SHELDON

By CHARLES R. SKINNER, A.M., LL.D., State Superintendent of Public Instruction, New York.\*

When a fellow-laborer in the educational field lays down his burden, it seems fitting that those who live after him, and who have been inspired by his character, should pay a tribute to his memory. My theme is the life and character of Edward Austin Sheldon. One year ago he met with us at Milwaukee. To-night the waves of Lake Ontario sing a requiem to his memory in the city in which he did his greatest work.

For more than half a century he gave himself, body, soul, and spirit, to the work of education. Courageous, sincere, enthusiastic, patient, persevering, he overcame difficulties, removed obstacles, won victories, where others with judgment less cool, with zeal less intense, would have been disheartened and driven from the field. New York mourns him by the highest right. It was New York State which gave him his great opportunity, but his aims and efforts were so universal, the grasp of his hope so broad, that no local limitations could bind him. We of New York rejoice that these fifty years of service were given to education in our own State, and that we are the inheritors of the fruits of his labors.

No man can live a noble life for three score years and ten, and work in the educational fields as Dr. Sheldon worked for fifty years, without leaving his impress upon the world, and exerting a powerful influence upon his State and country. His life was not revealed to him in a vision. His way was not pointed out to him by the finger of fortune; his problem was hidden in the quarries, the solution of which must be drilled by trial and disappointment, and blasted by unremitting effort. He found the law uncongenial, business ventures unprofitable, and the ministry a field too narrow for his ambitions. He found not his work in these professions. Around him were multitudes of the poor, whose condition arrested his attention and touched his heart. To help them he organized a school, and on a salary of \$300 per year began his first teaching. He had found his work and he determined to know it. Horace Mann, Henry Barnard and Edward Sheldon all attempted other pursuits, amid constant disappointments, before becoming what they were

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\*Memorial address delivered before the National Educational Association of the United States, at Washington, D. C., July 7, 1898.

intended to be—educators. Education and its wonderful possibilities became the inspiration of their lives.

Loving friends have told us the charming story of his useful life. They have told us of his Puritan birth, of his home and its congenial surroundings, of his early struggles, his college longings and experiences—how he came to Oswego to meet his first discouragement in business; how he became interested in the free-school movement which he was compelled to abandon; how he organized the schools of Syracuse and gave them an impetus they still feel; how he was called back to Oswego by the free-school party; how he laid his plans for advanced instruction in the principles and methods of teaching, and established it forever as a mighty force in education; how, believing in patriotic citizenship, he offered his services to his country to preserve the Union which he loved; how his plan developed into a school for the training of primary teachers; how the Legislature came to his aid in 1862, through the sympathy of the State Superintendent; how, in 1867, the Oswego Normal was accepted as a part of the great normal school of the State; how for thirty years he worked “like a Hercules,” as Carlyle says, as its principal; how he resisted tempting offers to honorable fields elsewhere, preferring to finish his work here; how he was called into other States to assist in organizing method schools upon his plan; how men and women were attracted from every county and State and country to come within the charmed circle of his influence, and how they became instruments in extending that influence and in organizing similar schools in other States and countries; how inspired by his growing success, institutions were founded to uplift the colored people of the South; how echoes of his influence came from the Republic of South America, the Sandwich Islands, and from far-away Japan; how he wrote the books which helped others and extended his power for good; how at the great Columbian Exposition he was an honored figure in educational deliberations, and received a medal of honor for his beloved institution “for excellence of equipment, method and wise usefulness”; and how, finally, discouragement gave place to hope, and defeat was crowned with glorious victory. Surely the “end crowned the work,” and patient, self-sacrificing service had its reward.

Do we ask if such a life, with such a character woven into it, had an influence on our educational theories and methods? It was

more than influence—it was *inspiration*. Always holding high ideals himself, he inspired other with lofty purpose and noble ambition. He transmitted to others hope, and faith, and resolution, and many men and women of to-day confess that whatever of success they have attained in teaching children they owe to his inspiration and influence.

Dr. Sheldon was distinguished for his purity of character, for his zeal as an educator, for his persistent, progressive spirit, even to the last day of his life. His good judgment, his simplicity, his earnestness, his devotion to principle, were the bulwarks of his life. What he believed to be right he fearlessly defended in the face of opposition which would have crushed a man with less faith. He was conspicuous throughout New York State and throughout America, not alone for his scholarship, but for his thorough grasp of sound educational principles and correct methods of teaching, for his power to penetrate an educational proposition and fix the value, for his ability to detect a fault or recognize a virtue in educational method. He did not claim to be a profound student of technical branches of learning, but his education was strong because it was broad, generous, and humane. What he knew he knew thoroughly, and he made splendid use of his knowledge and training.

He was the first great advocate in the country of the proposition that children should be taught according to certain fixed natural laws which always have governed and always will govern the development of children and determine their possibilities. Believing in the doctrines of Pestalozzi and Froebel, he was their most distinguished representative in this country, and the first to point out the necessity of observing in the training of children certain unchangeable laws of nature which could not be violated without spoiling life. He believed that every child represented nature as much as a tree or flower, and should be studied and taught by natural methods.

He said of his work many years ago: "In this plan of studies the object is not so much to impart information as to educate the senses and awaken a spirit of inquiry. To this end the pupils must be encouraged to do most of their talking and acting." In 1873 he said, in an address to the students at the Geneseo Normal School: "I may judge your work by a standard which you do not recognize. I cannot determine the education of a child by its ability to answer questions in a given way. These answers may be learned

from books. Rather let me ask a question to which they have not learned an answer from the text-books, and let them give an answer in their own language, from their own thought."

Was this the new education? Whether new or old, it worked a revolution in educational methods—in the proper treatment of the children. When the world became convinced that object-teaching was related to the happiness of the children, when it was certain that it could not be laughed down nor stamped out, this school and Dr. Sheldon's efforts became centers of observation. They were the Mecca to all teachers who had been led to believe there was a simpler, better way to teach children. Through his work and his influence in first attracting attention to this new principle in the education of children, Dr. Sheldon helped to lay broad and deep the foundations of a system which will never again be questioned or attacked, but which to-day recognizes the power and scope and the possibilities of the kindergarten as a living, vital force in education, and places it within reach of millions of our children. It is no longer an experiment, but a settled fact, and we now know what it means to lead children early to think and do for themselves.

Beyond this, the influence which he exerted through all these years has led our educators into other avenues of thought, and the principles which he advocated have developed well-organized plans of investigation. As a result, whatever is practical or valuable in child-study and nature-study, as we find them, comes through his teaching.

If this influence was felt in the proper education of children from a child's standpoint, so it has been exerted for more than a generation over those who taught the children. In all his teachings he believed that in the development of the true teacher there must be, not only broad scholarship and professional training, but behind and back of all this must be the true spirit of the teacher. He taught his teachers to be independent and self-reliant—to work out questions for themselves and not depend upon text-books. In this way his teachers learned to teach independence and self-reliance to their pupils.

We have in the common schools of New York State a better knowledge of real educational methods, a better knowledge of correct educational principles, more teaching with heart and soul in it, and less form. If this claim is well founded, we owe much of the excellence of our schools, the spirit of our teachers, improved

methods of instruction, to the influence of Dr. Sheldon, exerted upon the men and women whom he taught in this school and whom he led to higher ideals.

Dr. Sheldon's influence will live and be powerful for years, when even his name may be forgotten. Teachers whom he taught will have visions of what he never saw, and will teach other teachers to whose sight even better things will come—a progressive and stimulating vision whose beauty and usefulness shall never end. Dr. Sheldon's quiet, peaceful, loving, spirit, his patience, his courage, his consecration to his work as an educator, will live in the history of his pupils and their devotion to duty. He was emphatically a teacher of those who taught teachers and made others realize the value and dignity of a true teacher's life. Behind his profession, behind his work, stood the *man*. His sterling manhood shone out in all he did through his whole professional life.

As an author of educational works he breathed his sympathetic spirit into his books, and the influence of his thought and personality went wherever his works were read; and who can tell the power of a written word, conceived in the hope of helping others? Through the printed page he multiplied his influence over teachers and pupils, and perpetuated his power. His advanced thought, his clear statement, his mastery of the subject, and his conscientious purpose made him as successful in touching the lives of his readers as in personal contact with those he taught.

In the educational associations of the State and country he was always welcome, and took a deep interest, not only in promoting their objects, but in the discussions which they furnished. Even if his associates differed with him, they admired his rugged sincerity, his earnestness of purpose, and the courteous bravery of his gentle speech. He was everybody's friend; he had no enemies in the educational field, and was never provoked in debate beyond the bounds of kindly firmness. This influence which he exerted in these associations was always in the direction of higher standards. His last educational visit was at Milwaukee, where his face, like a loving benediction, smiled upon those who gathered in the National Educational Association, a most familiar figure; and my last look upon my friend was as he mingled happily with the vast concourse of educators which gathered there.

We speak of great centers of light and heat, and their influences upon what they touch—upon nature, upon man, and field, and

flower. The light of his life penetrated the atmosphere of many a life which touched his own, and this light will shine on for years and ages, and be transmitted to bless generations which he will never see. We who are left should rejoice that our friend did not outlive his work. He died with his armor on, and entered into the presence of the God he loved and worshiped with soul still stirred with affection for the institution which he builded and to which he had given so bountifully of mind and hand and heart. Surely he must have entered upon that higher life with blessed memories of work here which has given him so much happiness. His last days were occupied with plans and hopes for future usefulness to the institution with which he had long been identified. If a personal allusion may be pardoned here, let me say that these hopes formed the subject of my last conference with Dr. Sheldon. He discussed plans for raising the standard of admission and establishing a higher course of study with all the zeal of a man who still had faith in the future, and his good heart was full of hope in anticipation of still grander achievements and greater usefulness in his profession. The fifty years which lay behind him were an inspiration, rather than a memory. His face was always toward the rising sun.

He loved his work, and put into it all the strength of his calm mind, tender heart and trained understanding. His enthusiasm for his profession was so infectious that no one whose privilege it was to counsel with him could fail to be strengthened and helped. His greatest charm was his simplicity. Modest in the estimate of his own abilities, he was upheld and sustained at all times by the sincerity and integrity of his own aims and principles.

It was a touching tribute to his memory published on the day of his death:

"The life he loved is nobler than anything that could be said of him. If we could correctly measure the man, we must measure the things he loved. He loved his home, he loved the children, he loved his country, he loved nature, and he loved his God.

"His love for these things—home, humanity, God—explains our love for him. He was kind and gentle and pure. His life was rounded and benign. In his teaching he kept step with civilization, progress, education, and virtue."

We who knew him will cherish the memory of the great soul that dwelt in a form so gracious; the sustaining strength of personal

friendship; the achievements for education; with which his name must be ever blended; the consecration of a life in tender sympathy with mankind—all these are far too precious to be lost from our memories, or permitted to perish from our traditions.

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## SOME REMINISCENCES OF EDWARD AUSTIN SHELDON

BY HERMAN KRUSE, MEMBER OF THE OSWEGO FACULTY FROM 1862  
TO 1867

It was through the recommendation of Miss Jones, whose engagement at Oswego ended at the close of the school-year (in 1862) that Mr. Sheldon's attention was directed to myself. The letter of invitation, which he sent me to Lancaster Mass., where I then resided, was calculated to give me a favorable opinion of the man, who seemed earnestly intent to labor in the interest of truth and progress without unduly elating the part he had taken in it, or indulging in vain promises. It is thus I found him on my arrival in Oswego, and ever afterwards.

Although my work was at first chiefly connected with giving lessons in the city schools—in drawing, French, etc.—I spent with the greatest interest two hours in the afternoon with the Normal Class, assembled in a room of one of the city schools, where methods were discussed and lessons given in the Practice school were submitted to the criticism of the class. In my opinion Mr. Sheldon passed some of his happiest hours in the Fourth Ward school-building, where the Normal school class had its sessions, and where the first experiments were made in applying the methods introduced there, to the instruction of children of various grades. He never missed a session of this class, and sat there with his teachers, eager to improve his mind and to receive new inspiration for the performance of his task. As a proof that he considered himself a pupil of that class, we find his name mentioned as one of its graduates in 1862.

Much of Mr. Sheldon's undeniably great moral influence over his pupils must be attributed to this spirit of love and charity, which shone most brightly, when he had to deal with weaknesses that were either the result of a neglected education, or of limited talents, provided they were supported by honest effort. Those who have been teachers in his school, and who were called upon at regular intervals, to decide about the granting of diplomas to the members of the graduating class, can testify with what an earnestness our worthy



Principal begged to give them another trial, or perhaps, tried to excuse some of their failings. Indeed it was hard for him, who felt so much sympathy for the poor struggling part of society, to destroy their hope of earning an honest living, after having brought so much sacrifice to accomplish this end.

There were often cases where negligence, disregard of duty, or unbecoming conduct in some of the pupils, engaged the attention of the Principal, but even these he never treated with unbecoming harshness or stern condemnation, but rather as a sorrowing father, who would wish the erring children to see for themselves the fault they had committed, and the way to redeem it.

I am reminded in this connection, of a little incident told me by a lady referring to the time when, as an inexperienced girl, suffering from home-sickness, she had entered the school. For lack of attention to what was going on she had failed to listen and had not obeyed one of the rules communicated by Mr. Sheldon to the entering class. She was cited to appear before him. When she stood there, weeping and trembling from fear of what was in store for her, he took pity on her youth and innocence and forgot all reproach, and said in a tender voice: "I will be a father to you—go back to your class." Similar examples of kindness, most of them probably buried in the hearts of the recipients, might be quoted.

Even in difficult cases, he never, or with hardly any exception, did he give way to angry reproach. I only recollect one instance when a conceited young man, who with others was under reproof, on account of some not very serious offense against a fellow-pupil, ventured to give the gray-headed principal advice as to how he should have treated the matter. The thundering accents of Mr. Sheldon's voice in reply to this impertinent advice, made the young man aware of his proper place in the economy of the world.

Mr. Sheldon never considered himself exempt from observing with scrupulous conscientiousness the rules concerning punctuality and regularity in attendance, at the morning devotions and at lessons, which he considered binding on his scholars. He did not consider it a sufficient excuse to plead, that one had not been aware of the time, or that some trifling incident, which might have been conquered by earnest will or determination, had caused the delay. He went even further, as the following incident will show:

On a stormy day, the roads had been partially blocked with snow, more especially the one that leads to the school from his



rural home nearly a mile away. About five minutes after the opening of school he entered the hall, nearly out of breath, and took a seat on the platform. At the close of the exercise, he advanced on the platform, totally dejected, and like a humble penitent he apologized to the whole school "for having been derelict to a duty, for the neglect of which he had often blamed others."

How much this act reveals the humble spirit of Mr. Sheldon, and his readiness to place himself on a footing of equality with his subordinates in the observation of moral duties!

Mr. Sheldon viewed with the same conscientiousness the keeping of a *given promise*; and it was one of the secrets of his power that one could rely on his word without the fear of its being broken for the furtherance of selfish interests.

Nothing speaks more eloquently about the blessed influence of the departed, than the fact, that the conduct of the pupils after his death was characterized by the same attention to order and duty as it was before.

A word should be said of Mr. Sheldon's influence in the devotional exercises held every morning and on festive occasions. His venerable form stands vividly before me, and I still hear his impressive addresses and prayers, uttered with a solemn, manly voice, which did not fail to be listened to with attention and reverence by the whole assembly. When he appealed to the spirit of truthfulness, honesty, and strict attention to duty, his hearers knew that these sentiments proceeded from a man who gave every day living examples of these virtues. How his words and acts of love and benevolence impressed others is well expressed by the pastor of his church in one of the memorial addresses: "Mr. Sheldon's religion was neither a proposition nor a profession, it was a passion. He did not argue about God, but rather gazed into the face of God, as a true son looks into the countenance of a loving father. He was a loving member, and this is all; for God is love, and love is the fulfilling of the law."

#### MR. SHELDON'S RELATIONS TO HIS ASSISTANT TEACHERS AND THEIR WORK

Mr. Sheldon's teachers might at one time have been divided into three groups: the first comprising those who had joined him at the start; the second, those who had been pupils in the class-room as well as in the School of Practice; the third class comprising

persons called hither from outside localities. The latter were generally well recommended and were expected to teach some more advanced branches, such as Natural History, Chemistry, the ancient languages, etc.—subjects which hitherto had not received sufficient attention at school, to enable pupils to teach them. The prevailing spirit of the school was, however, so powerful as to induce even the teachers called from outside, to conform to it by the use of objective means of illustration and by oral teaching. Mr. Sheldon was thus privileged in having to deal with a harmonious corps of teachers, and to meet with little or no opposition to the introduction of measures intended for the good of the school and its healthy progress.

The weekly conferences or meetings with his teachers were characterized by full freedom of expression of opinions and convictions, and the decision of a question was generally left to the majority.

Mr. Sheldon preserved throughout his career a modest disposition. He never boasted about the work he had performed, even when its success was universally acknowledged. On the other hand, he was every ready to give full credit and praise to the efforts of men who had worked in the same field with himself. Instead of feeling jealous in regard to the improved means or methods supposed to have been discovered by them, or in regard to the priority of this discovery—he manifested the most unselfish admiration for their labors and sacrifices in the cause of education. The following incident may illustrate this trait:

One morning the school, assembled in the great hall for the morning exercises, looked with astonishment at the entrance of Mr. Sheldon, whose appearance indicated that he had travelled day and night, and that—before going to his own home—he was impelled by a deep emotion, to communicate to his beloved school a late joyous experience, of which his heart was full to overflowing. This glorious experience consisted of a week's visit to Colonel Parker's Normal School at Englewood, and the intimate acquaintance formed there between the two men. With unbounded enthusiasm and unqualified praise our warm-hearted principal spoke of the ideas he had seen in the making. His strongly emphasized exclamation: "Yes, Parker is a *great* man!" seemed to imply that *he* himself was but a poor tyro in comparison. Such was the modesty of the man.

The work of both these remarkable men belongs to history. They both were pioneers in breaking down the old mechanical routine of teaching, and substituting for it exercises more suitable to the children's minds, based on perception, and capable of developing the reasoning power, which the mere memorizing of even the best books never will do. They both had to meet occasionally opposition to their plans, which in Colonel Parker's case often became personal, owing to his more combative spirit, while Mr. Sheldon, with his calm, peaceful temperament, and his unflinching pursuit of what he thought to be right, was often able to pacify or even to convert his former enemies.

Mr. Sheldon's work has laid deep roots in the soil of educational progress, and that the better class of his pupils, scattered all over the Union, have received a salutary impulse for good work by the application of broad principles so instilled in them, as to enable them to distinguish between these and such experimental contrivances as some young, inexperienced teachers often consider firmly wedded to the philosophy they are supposed to follow.

Mr. Sheldon took the greatest pride in, and bestowed most of his time and attention on, the work done in the Practice Department, both by the officers and students of the school. While the value derived from the theoretical instruction received in the Normal school formed an invaluable preparation for objective teaching, it was undoubtedly its practical application to the teaching of different grades, the experiences made in exciting the interest of children and in developing a subject, the trying task of maintaining discipline by proper means, and last, not least, the salutary criticism to which they were occasionally subjected by competent judges, which enabled the school to send out so many efficient teachers, and which, I venture to say, constituted one of the main causes of the high reputation enjoyed by the Oswego Normal School. It has the more claim to this honor, as it was the first Normal School in the United States in which a *real* trial and practice school was established, not merely a so-called Model school, in which the teachers in training were supposed to act as spectators to the performances of others, without taking a hand in the work.

Towards the latter part of Mr. Sheldon's management, some of the more rigid features of the criticism of practice work were abolished, care being taken that pupils in training should not be discouraged by having a whole catalogue of their short-comings laid

before them after each lesson, given in public, but only those that were of the most importance and might be avoided by honest effort.

#### MR. SHELDON AT HOME

When I think of this home, I see before me a white cottage, situated on a peninsula, from whose extremity the eye commands charming views on the mirror of Lake Ontario, while the house itself is safely sheltered by a shady grove of trees, which have given to the property the name of "Shady Shore." This cosy retreat afforded to Mr. Sheldon's mind and eye a pleasing and instructive intercourse with nature. This was finely expressed by one of the speakers at one of the Memorial meetings: "The grove, the garden, the orchard, the lake, were his teachers. In these more than in books he found the inspiration of his life. He read them, not as botanist, not as naturalist, but as a child, to whom they were an open revelation of a divine intelligence; to him they were a boundless store of knowledge, in which he found much to contemplate, and the very contemplation was inspiration, joy, peace."

To these "contemplative" influences there were added some which appealed to his restless activity, and to his predilection for operations, operations connected with the raising and culture of natural products, such as honey, poultry, etc. Although these experiments were far from profitable, they yet fulfilled their object in giving to their promoter a congenial occupation and to his residence and surroundings a rural character.

Mr. Sheldon's home circle was an ideal one. Not only the children and near relatives, but many friends and wanderers like myself have after a long journey entered the familiar grounds of "Shady Shore" as into a haven of rest. I did so for the last time in the second week of June, some days preceding my eightieth birthday. There was but little change visible about the premises, and the welcome bestowed by our venerable friend was as cordial as ever. There were visible on his countenance traces of advancing age and symptoms of that sickness to which he succumbed a little more than two months afterwards. In the death of his dearly beloved wife and partner for forty-six years, he had already passed through the shadow of the valley of death, so as to be willing and resigned to meet the reality whenever God shall call him from his work. Still he felt happy to meet his beloved daughter Mary and

her husband, as well as myself and Professor Griggs, and lost no time in introducing us to his school.

I remember how, in 1862, I entered for the first time the precincts sacred as the home of one of the most distinguished educators of this Union. I remembered all the happy family reunions that had taken place here, as well as those in which the pupils and teachers of the Normal School participated on festival occasions; for instance, after the graduating exercises, or whenever Mr. Sheldon wished the pupils to enjoy some pleasant sport or recreation, which was generally accompanied by a liberal distribution of maple sugar, roast corn, or Bartlett pears gathered from his trees.

The death of our dearly beloved friend Sheldon occurred less than two months after the celebration of the eightieth anniversary of my birth, when his inspiring words before a large assembly of teachers and pupils sounded like a blessing to me, and have shed a halo over my declining days.

We are not allowed to pry into what awaits us in the life beyond, but we have a strong faith that the vision which seemed to rise before our dying friend, "Mother and Christ," may become a reality in the thought, that *hearts who were ONE during life, will not be separated; and that pure, holy thoughts in the service of truth will find a new field of labor beyond.* It is with this calm conviction that our friend exchanged his earthly task, which was a blessing to thousands of his pupils and friends, for the one awaiting him in his eternal Home.

#### A PARALLEL DRAWN BETWEEN PESTALOZZI AND SHELDON

Pestalozzi and Sheldon belong to history as benefactors of the human race in elevating the standard of education, so as to make its blessings accessible to the children of the poor as well as to those of the wealthier classes.

Men who have worked, toiled, and sacrificed themselves for the above purpose, and who, animated by noble motives, were sustained by faith in God and His eternal laws, will stand out in the far future as shining lights—when their imperfections will be forgotten, and their motives and actions better understood, because divested of the disturbing influence of surrounding circumstance.

The writer of these "Reminiscences" believes—on account of

the intimate relations existing between his father and Pestalozzi, and of his own long connection with Mr. Sheldon and his work—to have sufficient data, from which to draw a parallel between these two men. He is fully aware that great allowance must be made in this comparison, on account of the different periods in which they lived (the time of their birth being nearly eighty years apart), the different countries they inhabited, and the different circumstances by which they were surrounded.

There are, however, some features which characterize all noble, philanthropic souls: *Love for human kind, pity for the poor and suffering, great perseverance and noble efforts in pursuing their aim, unflinching courage* in doing what they consider to be right, a *pleasing modesty* in regard to their own powers, and a *firm trust in God and His constant care and protection*.

One needs but read the history of these two men to see this statement verified. Incidentally, there are other points of resemblance; viz., that each was born in a republic, of respectable, hard-working parents in moderate circumstances, that both received a fragmentary education, which, although it allowed them to enter college, yet never led to their graduation, nor gave them any profound scientific knowledge, nor the preparation for any definite vocation. Each also, in early manhood, turned his energies enthusiastically to rural pursuits and plans, with the intention of making this a life-work.

What induced them first to give attention to education, and make it the great task of their life was: *pity for poor neglected children*, and the hope of saving them by the influence of love, attention to their moral and mental wants, and by good example. It may be surmised that this voluntary sacrifice in behalf of the poor was not a lucrative business, but one of hard labor and frequent disappointment.

It was fortunate that both men were then, and throughout their whole career, assisted and comforted by noble wives, who had mind and heart enough to sympathize with the aspirations of their husbands, and to condone their failings in wordly or personal matters.

They both were privileged to witness the success of their work, and have the consciousness in their old age that they would be remembered by thousands of affectionate pupils and friends of education after their departure from this earth.

Both have statues erected to their memory—Pestalozzi sixty years after his death, Sheldon after three years. A statue, it is true, does not warrant perpetual remembrance. The only imperishable monument consists in a work which from simple beginning or seed spreads out to a noble tree, whose fruit will always remind a grateful posterity of the seed from which it sprang, and of the gardener who took care of it in its tender years.

A nervous organization and very susceptible temper caused Pestalozzi to be sensitive, restless, alternately enthusiastic and despondent during all his life; while Mr. Sheldon always retained a calm, equable disposition and manner.

Pestalozzi exercised a great magnetic power by the fervor of his feelings, and by the enthusiasm with which he proclaimed the principles of his method. Although it would be presumptuous to call him the original discoverer of these principles, he and his associates have at least the merit of having devised the proper means by which a distinct objective view of a subject was first impressed on the pupils, and then made the basis for further development.

Mr. Sheldon made use of these means, whenever he found them conducive to progress, and hence modestly declined the honor of having originated a method, such as the foolish expression of "Oswego system," or the even worse one, "Oswego idea," would seem to imply.

On the other hand, he introduced reforms in the conduct and management of the Practice school, and in the supervision and criticism of its teachers, which have supplied a model to other Normal Schools in the country.

One great difference between the two educators consists in the different character of the work assigned to them. Pestalozzi had during all his life the management of a private school, which gave him undoubtedly more liberty for making experiments with his pupils than was granted to Mr. Sheldon, who, as superintendent of city schools and principal of a State Normal School, had to be more cautious in the selection and treatment of subjects, so as to satisfy the school authorities and the public.

Both men, it is true, received liberal support; Pestalozzi by the approval and adoption of his system by distinguished scholars, which led to its introduction into the public schools at the command of the King of Prussia and other princes; Sheldon by liberal grants

given to his school and to other normal schools partly organized on the model of his.

Finally, it would be wrong, in regard to the religious belief of these men, to lay too much stress on outward manifestations dictated by creed or sect. Both were one in holding to the essentials of true religion: Faith in God and Love for their fellow men.





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